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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

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THE negotiations of this country with France and Italy regarding the limitation of naval armaments have gathered an unexpected momentum during the week. The situation, as we go to press, is one of great interest, importance, and obscurity. The London Treaty left the position extremely unsatisfactory both between France and this country and between France and Italy. The demand of France for a total margin of 244,000 tons over the total tonnage of the Italian fleet not only made agreement with Italy impossible, but introduced complications with the British figures. If Italy and France were to be brought into the Treaty, therefore, it was first necessary to obtain a modification of the French demands. This was the object of Mr. Craigie's preliminary negotiations in Paris. These were so hopeful that Mr. Henderson and Mr. Alexander crossed the channel on Monday to continue them with the French Ministers. Again things moved rapidly, and on Tuesday the British negotiators went on to Rome. The air is full of rumours, many tendencious. It seems to be certain, however, that a modification of the total tonnage demands of the French has been obtained, which makes an agreement with Italy possible. That would be a real achievement, for without it a naval armaments race between the two countries is the unpleasant prospect. It is also stated that France has agreed to reduce her original submarine figures. This is the bright side of the picture; the dark is represented by the rumours that the French consent has been purchased by British "concessions," *e.g.*, by support of French military demands. It is to be hoped that these are among the tendencious rumours—they come from the French Press, which so often takes the will for the deed—for there are some prices too high to pay even for an agreement between France and Italy.

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Mr. Churchill has long been hailed in many quarters as the future leader of the Conservative Party. He is not popular with back benchers, he is not an orthodox protectionist, and his temperament and frequent changes of front have rendered his authority distasteful to the rank and file of his party. But his supremacy on the platform and in Parliament, combined with the divisions in the Conservative ranks on the subject of India have given him his long-sought opportunity. He is known to have resigned from his "shadow" Cabinet as a protest against Mr. Baldwin's flabbiness, and on Wednesday, at a meeting of the Central Council of the Conservative Party, an "emergency resolution" moved by Commander Locker-Lampson gave him scope for a brilliant flank attack. The resolution, urging a "strong stand for law and order" in India was carried unanimously; and in carrying it, Mr. Churchill reasserts

his prestige at a blow. Mr. Baldwin's stock stands now at a very low level. More serious, from the national point of view, is the expressed resolve of his party to throw India into the cockpit of politics. If Mr. Churchill by these methods attains the coveted leadership the country may yet begin to wonder whether the advice tendered at the end of the General Strike, that it might be safer for the future of this country to hang Mr. Churchill, ought not to have been taken more seriously.

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It hardly seems worth while to waste more time over the Trade Union Bill. The Liberals seem determined to insist both on the retention of "contracting-in" and on a wide definition of illegal strikes which may be interpreted as going, in certain respects, even beyond the Act of 1927. The Trade Unions do not want the Bill on these terms; and it will be of no use to the Labour Party unless "contracting-out" is restored. The Bill therefore, seems unlikely to pass, or to be worth passing in any form in which it is likely to emerge from the House of Commons; and, if it were worth passing, the Lords would be certain to reject it. If, then, the discussions in committee are allowed to go on, this can hardly have any other object than to convince those who have pressed for the Bill of the impossibility of passing it in the present Parliament. The Liberal amendments to clause one, which would practically rule out any big strike in the vital industries, logically involve compulsory arbitration; for it is impossible to deny the right to strike without substituting an alternative method of settlement. But neither Trade Unionists nor employers want compulsory arbitration; and it can hardly be forced upon them. The result is a complete deadlock; and we venture to prophesy that the Bill will be withdrawn, if not this week, long before it can be reported to the House. In these circumstances, the alternative vote may go too; for the Labour Party does not want it, and will be even less willing to accept it if there is to be no *quid pro quo*.

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The result of the East Islington by-election can be satisfactory to nobody. Out of 61,126 electors, 30,537 —or fewer than 50 per cent.—took the trouble to poll at all. A Select Committee of the House of Commons is endeavouring to discover what is wrong with Parliament. East Islington, in part, supplies the answer: democracy is losing faith in its intruments. Mrs. Manning, the victor in this battle of shadows, represents one-sixth of her constituents. But if Labour can find little cause for jubilation, what of Liberalism? The continued disintegration of the party is reflected in Major Crawfurd's meagre poll. As for the Tories, the slump in the "official" Conservative poll is even more sensational. Lord Beaverbrook's sense of showmanship was once more in evidence; money, noise, and the mouthings of the yellow Press almost carried the day for his fine figure of a Brigadier. In these amazing campaigns neither the personality of the candidates nor the policy they advocate seem to make any difference. That the Beaverbrook "policy" can attract votes is the disquieting feature of the situation; for it is a policy that will not stand five minutes' examination by anyone of normal intelligence. Like the Cheshire cat, it begins and ends with a grin.

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Nothing has yet occurred to upset the nicely balanced apple-cart in Spain. The new Ministry is, of course, making promises of reforms. The municipal and county elections will be held early in April, and a General Election for Parliament will presumably follow. This, it is announced, will be a genuine one; but the Socialists and Republicans in the Constituent bloc do not believe it—the Cortes will simply be a fraud, they say. A new party, which is being formed under the title of the National Agrarian Party, is less hostile to the Government. It urges that economic reforms are more important than constitutional. That may be true; but it does not seem likely that the one will be achieved without the other. The Government are talking about the stabilisation of the peseta, but so vaguely that neither the National Agrarians nor anybody else can suppose they are very serious about the matter. They are hoping to placate the universities and the students who gave General Berenguer so much trouble, and even, we are told, to settle the Catalan problem, by passing a measure of "almost complete Home Rule." Behind this not very imposing facade preparations for the main struggle are going on, and the main struggle is between democracy and absolutism. There are others to come of no less importance, but this must be settled first.

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Two events have just emphasised the rapid decline of the power of the Nazis in Germany. On Sunday the Reichsbanner or Republican Defence Organisation held manifestations throughout the Reich. They were attended by large numbers of people and revealed the strength of Republican sentiment in Germany and its determination to resist any Putsch attempts on the part of the Hitlerites. The President of the Banner announced that within the past month 160,000 Republicans have been enlisted in the new defence force, the so-called Schützformation which is a natural counterpart to the "storm-battalions" of the Hitlerites. At the same time the Catholic youth of Germany have also been passing resolutions expressing loyalty to Dr. Brüning and determined opposition to the Fascist methods of the Nazis, who in the meantime are showing their political bankruptcy by boycotting the Reichstag. Even the notorious Commander Ehrhardt has been constrained to admit that Hitler has achieved nothing, and that by his political escapades he has committed a political hari-kari. It would seem that Hitler's success at the last election has been a blessing in disguise in that it came before he and his followers were ripe for it.

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THE ALTERNATIVES

WHAT is the real issue in British politics? To-day they are taking on the appearance of a pantomime in a hospital: the politicians play their variety parts and the public, conscious of ailments which are not assuaged by laughter, watch the irrelevant entertainment with growing distaste. All the jolly bustle of the party conflict continues: the bargains, the close divisions and the personalities, the sudden exits and entrances, the wit, the eloquence and badinage. Parliament does not lose authority for lack of Parliamentarians: Mr. Churchill, Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Snowden are all classical exponents of their profession. And yet the parties split into fragments, and at each by-election the same ominous signs appear. The Labour poll drops by a third, the Liberal vote tends rapidly towards zero, and the Conservatives are successfully split by a preposterous campaign which would never have drawn votes at all except at a time when people were beginning from very despair to welcome any display of energy, however comic and irrelevant. As for the Labour Government, it has disappointed all expectations. In India and in foreign affairs, where the prophets assured us that Labour must fail, if only for lack of experience, they have shown themselves, on the whole, strikingly efficient. At home they have proved scarcely less Tory than the Tories. Overworked, bewildered, confronted with a perplexing economic crisis and hampered by a Parliamentary machine nicely calculated for obstruction, they have apparently given up all hope of leading or in any real sense governing at all. As a political programme they await the luck of an electoral issue, hoping perhaps that the House of Lords will some day throw out some measure which their supporters think it worth while to have introduced, enabling them to go to the country on the old Radical cry of "Peers or People." If so, they profoundly misunderstand the basis on which the Labour Party stands and the real issue which this country faces.

That issue has been very clearly presented by the resignation of several of Sir Oswald Moseley's adherents. Politically their revolt may prove negligible, and their manifesto is perhaps more likely to rally the friends of Sir William Morris than the disappointed ranks of Labour. But can the Government really afford to lose the support of those who, as Mr. Strachey says in his letter of resignation, joined the Labour Party in the belief that it would strive to be the instrument through which "the Socialist conception of an ordered and just society" might be realised? This kind of talk may sound high-falutin' to-day, but it is on such a belief that the Labour movement in this country has been built, and it is because the rank and file have believed that a Labour Government would not be merely an alternative to the Tories, but would be prepared to fight the battle of public control against private interests, that they have worked for the Labour movement with a disinterested and indeed a religious enthusiasm. That has been the greatest asset of the Labour Party, and it is not an insignificant fact that to-day in the Commons it is Liberals, many of whom really believe in national planning, who evoke Labour cheers in unemployment debates.

The greatest error of the present Government is to imagine that when trade is bad, industries depressed, or finance shaky, then is not the time for the extension of State control. On the contrary, now or never is the golden time for a Government which believes in "national planning." When private enterprise is booming there is but little hope of persuading it to submit to an ordered scheme. But when every industry is asking for guidance and help, it is comparatively easy for a Government to lay down the lines on which development shall take place, to restore confidence by guaranteeing expenditure which private employers dare not embark on unaided. Sound policy to-day is to use the period of depression to turn our unemployed resources, both of men and of capital, to re-equipping the community for its share in the more active world trade and the improved home market of the future. So far as possible our policy must be to restart industry, and to devote the product not to consumption but to providing capital equipment to enable us to enjoy in the future at once a higher standard of living and a better organised economic structure.

The real division in English politics to-day is between those who believe that England, in this, if in nothing else, like Russia, should deliberately plan its economic future, and those who regard the risk of planning as too great. It is possible to take the view which Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden seem to share with Mr. Baldwin, that there is nothing very much to be done, then we must hold what we can of our own until the economic blizzard is over and begin once again, when prosperity returns, upon the old cycle of alternate boom and slump. Such an attitude involves (and here Mr. Strachey is certainly right, in spite of official denials) lower wages and a reduced standard of living all round. It means that the great industrial revolution which is now taking place in this country, when new industries are moving South as once they moved North, will take its course, haphazard, uncoordinated and unregulated as did the industrial revolution a century and more ago. An article which we publish to-day by Mr. J. L. Hammond, who better than any other historian has understood what that unregulated revolution meant in terms of human suffering and in destruction to the life and beauty of England, suggests, by an historical example, what the alternative is. We permitted industrial Lancashire to grow without drains, without open spaces, without civilisation. The best thing that ever happened to the cotton towns was, as Mr. Hammond says, the cotton famine. At the inspiration of Cobden (ironically enough) the time of stagnation and starvation was used to make sewers (which private enterprise would never have found worth making), and to introduce some decency into Rochdale, Blackburn and Oldham. To-day we do not build without drains or open spaces. But we still have slums and do not destroy them, although another cotton famine offers a unique opportunity. And if we are not repairing the evils that come from failing to plan in the past, we are equally failing to prevent similar evils in the future. We are permitting highly capitalised areas to become derelict without attempting to utilise their assets for the new industries which every day grow up where they are, from a public point of view, often both economically unsuit-

able, as well as destructive to the English countryside. We are so ludicrously afraid of planning that we avoid guaranteeing that capital expenditure which would alone enable us to profit by a turn in the economic tide, when from no fault of ours the flow towards prosperity begins.

Of course there is danger in any "plan." We may plan wrongly. But it is safer to plan than not to plan even if there is an element of risk. Politically the danger to democracy of not doing anything is far greater than the danger of making a mistake. Dictatorships—the lesson is writ large all over Europe—arise not because constitutional governments are reckless—they never are—but because democracy is often timid, slow and inefficient. That need not happen in this country where we have the intelligence, if we have the will, to plan. If you are lost in a wood there are three courses open to you. You may ineffectively rush about in any and all directions like the parties of Lord Rothermere and Lord Beaverbrook; you may sit down until your rations give out, as Mr. Snowden would have us do; you may, if you are sensible, choose a likely path and without knowing exactly where it goes follow it in the belief that sooner or later it will take you out of the wood. If Labour fails to face the issue we shall find ourselves with a Tory plan, which will be no plan at all for England, but a policy of lowering our standard of living, increasing that economic nationalism, which is the temptation and curse of an anarchic world, and sacrificing the wage earner and the public interest to the rentier and the monopolist. The real issue is a national plan or a slow process of national stagnation.

EDUCATION, THE NEXT STEP

WHAT ought the Government to do, now that the Lords have rejected the School Attendance Bill? That the school leaving age ought to be raised, and raised at the earliest opportunity, goes without question. Despite the House of Lords, which seldom thinks it statesmanlike to improve the education of the people, that question scarcely needs arguing. All unprejudiced opinion favours a leaving age certainly not below fifteen, if only because the plans for better education embodied in the Hadow Report cannot be carried properly into effect without a raising of the age. The new post-primary schools cannot effectively furnish the education for which they are designed unless they have four years of the child's life to do it in. Nor can the cry of "national economy" be even plausibly invoked, unless we are assuming that the present world depression is to continue for years ahead. For it will take time to bring the higher leaving age into operation; and if we wait for trade to recover before we do it, we shall miss the favourable time when it is with us.

So far, so good. But it is still not easy to see what the Government ought to do. One course is to pass the Bill again in its present form next session and the session after, and then bring it into operation under the Parliament Act. This, however, not only assumes that the Government will be in office in two years' time, but also involves proceeding with a Bill which satisfies no one, and is itself the result of unfortunate compromises and dissensions. The Bill as it stands puts off the operation of the higher leaving age for too long, involves an unsatisfactory restriction of maintenance allowances, and embodies Mr. Scurr's dangerous and potentially destructive amendment, which in effect gives the religious denominations a power of veto, even if the House of Lords gives way. It is simply not worth while to continue on these terms. Better drop the Bill altogether than risk its destruction after all the toil and trouble of carrying it over the head of the House of Lords.

The alternative, evidently, is to introduce a new Bill; and we hope that this is the course which the Government will follow. But on what lines is the new Bill to be framed? One way would be to endeavour to reach a religious concordat in advance, and then to embody the agreed terms in the Bill, if any agreement could be secured. The other would be to tell the denominations frankly and openly that their dissensions will not deflect the Government from its path, and to bring forward a Bill based definitely on full public control of post-primary education, without regard for sectarian claims.

The second of these courses is the one that we should greatly prefer. We are not suggesting that any attack should be launched at present on the dual system as it exists in the primary schools. We may not like it; but it is impossible to end it just now. It is, however, quite another matter to admit and perpetuate the dual system of provided and non-provided schools in the new post-primary curriculum contemplated by the Hadow Committee. As we understand the position, the new "Hadow" schools are to be secondary schools—embodying the idea of "secondary education for all" which has been long in the forefront of the reform programme. If that is so, ought the dual system to apply? Ought not the new schools for children past the primary stage to be public schools in the true sense, fully owned and controlled by the authorities responsible for public education? If the "Hadow" reforms are to be the first instalment of a real system of "secondary education for all," we shall be making a fatal mistake if we allow the religious denominations to fasten firmly upon them, and so to extend their control from the primary to the secondary field.

We know, of course, that not everyone will accept this interpretation of "Hadowism." It was, indeed, not the least of the defects of the late Bill that it did not frankly face this issue. It was, in form, a Bill for extending elementary, rather than for developing secondary, education; and it contained no adequate guarantees that the new schools would be staffed and equipped in accordance with secondary rather than elementary standards. It therefore afforded no assurance that the extra year of education would be really worth while, and left the children largely at the mercy of the caprice or policy of the separate Local Education Authorities. If a new Bill is introduced, we hope it will be far more explicit on this point, making clear beyond shadow of doubt that the duty laid upon the L.E.A.s is not merely to add a year's schooling, but also to provide for all normal children, from the age of eleven, a real form of secondary education.

The more squarely this issue is faced, the easier will it be to meet the claims of the religious sectaries. If it is merely a question of adding on a year to the existing provision for elementary education, they have a good case for claiming that the old concordat shall continue. But if we are devising a new universal plan of secondary education, our evident duty is to consider the entire question *de novo*, and to frame the conditions in the best interests of the children, and not with a view to conciliating vested interests in religious education. There is no more a case for using State money for subsidising Catholic secondary schools, or Church secondary schools, or any other sort of sectarian secondary schools, than there is for a State subsidy to a Catholic University, or than there was for preserving religious tests for entry to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. At all events, we ought to avoid any step that will entrench religious vested interests in any part of the educational field which they have not already occupied. They have done enough harm in the past to the cause of educational progress to make us wary of doing anything to add to their power.

It will no doubt be said in answer that no Bill that takes up this courageous line stands a ghost of a chance of passing into law; and the success of Mr. Scurr and his associates will be quoted in support of this view. Our answer is that, in the present state of Parliament, no Bill that is worth

having stands any chance of becoming law; for the House of Lords will certainly reject any measure that the present House of Commons can be persuaded to pass, unless it is so mutilated as to become not worth passing. We have to make up our minds to the fact that we shall not get a tolerable Bill passed in the present Parliament. The question is, shall we get a tolerable Bill in the next, or even in the next but one?

We shall not get sound reform by deferring over much to sectarian claims. We shall get it only from a House of Commons strong enough to overcome the House of Lords, and from a Government bold enough to defy sectarian fanatics, even if they are found among the supporters of the party in power. Nor do we believe that to insist on this boldness is to put off the fruition of educational reform to the Greek Kalends. It will come sooner if it is passed on clear educational grounds than if it is allowed to turn on the particulars of a shady religious deal. The late Bill was not big enough in conception to arouse real enthusiasm. It provided only more, and not necessarily a different kind of education. And argument over it degenerated in the end into a wrangle over the prospects of Nonconformist teachers threatened with exclusion from their fair proportion of headmasterships. An important matter, no doubt, but not a matter likely to fire the country with enthusiasm for the cause of educational reform.

In our view, public education, paid for out of public funds, ought to be secular education. This would not exclude the provision of sectarian teaching, under arrangements made with the Local Education Authorities, for those children whose parents want it, provided that such teaching was not paid for out of public funds. We are not suggesting that this secular solution can be generally enforced at present, or that the Government should embody it fully in its new Bill. But we are definitely of opinion that the secular solution ought to be applied in the new post-primary schools.

If it is not applied, one of two things will happen. Either the standard of the new education will be much less than secondary, or the State will have to subsidise the sectarian schools on a scale which will leave no shadow of justification for their continued independence. It will hardly be disputed that to allow the non-provided schools to occupy the post-primary field will make it far harder than it would otherwise be to bring the new schools up to a true secondary standard. We shall not get the best education by applying the so-called "voluntary principle," but rather by establishing everywhere a full system of public provision.

We urge the Government, then, to frame a new Bill, to stand up firmly to the excessive claims of the religious sects, and to give the House of Lords next time a measure which the friends of education will feel to be really worth fighting for. The Lords will probably reject it too; for they fear education as men fear the plague. But then the country will know where it stands; and the friends of education will be able to fight for the interests of the children, and not for an ambiguous compromise which no one really believes to be a satisfactory solution of the problem.

THE LAST OF THE LAISSEZ-FAIRISTS

WHATEVER else history may in due time record as to the present administration of the United States by President Hoover, it is plain that it must describe him as a most valiant fighter for the liberty of the individual American to die of starvation without patronising and demoralising interference by his Government. On Lincoln's birthday, February 12th, Mr. Hoover, in a nation-wide radio address, appealed to the public to support him in his opposition to the passage by Congress of any measures providing direct Federal aid for the country's unemployed, or the sufferers from last year's drought in the South-Western States. The President pointed out that his Government was seeking to grapple with the problem by aiding or devising plans for construction and development projects, and by extending credits to the drought victims, so that it might "thus avoid the opiates of Government charity and the stifling of the national spirit of self-help."

The next day the Governor of Arkansas also appealed to the nation, asking for aid for no fewer than one million American citizens who were, he declared, face to face with death by starvation; whose means were exhausted; whose remaining cattle were perishing by the wayside; whose friends and relatives could offer no aid because they were in the same situation. They saw, he declared, nothing between them and death but "the Red Cross and the charity of their fellow-citizens." In the Senate this and other appeals, and a statement by Senator Caraway that already 100 persons were daily dying of starvation (without the opiates of Government charity), led to bitter attacks upon the President who had fed starving Belgians, Armenians, Russians, Germans, and others (in the case of the Russians with Federal funds directly appropriated by the Congress), but was then opposing the voting of $25,000,000 to be used for the purchasing of food to be given directly and without cost to starving fellow-countrymen. To this the President replied that it was ridiculous to charge him, with his record of feeding the Belgians and the Mississippi flood sufferers, with indifference to suffering humanity. He insisted, however, that the moneys to be appropriated should be paid out not as gifts but be given as loans with adequate security. To which the senators responded that sufferers who had any collateral securities were taking care of themselves; that neither Belgians nor Russians were asked for security before being fed; and that one should not withhold food from those dying of starvation in order to ask them what credits they had to offer.

The upshot was a typical politicians' compromise: Instead of $25,000,000 the Congress voted $20,000,000 for "farm rehabilitation," after the administration had given its word that the term "farm rehabilitation" would include keeping the wretches alive whose farms are to be restocked or are to be the basis for financial assistance. Thus Mr. Hoover has saved his face; nowhere will it appear on the statute books that, during the greatest economic crisis which has ever confronted the United States, so far one single dollar has been spent as an opiate of Government charity. Americans may be dying of starvation, as Senator Caraway declares, but if that is the case they are dying with their systems undrugged and their characters unbesmirched by anything approaching a dole—a dole to Mr. Hoover is apparently the final act of perfidy of any Government.

Meanwhile the struggle between the President and the Congress goes on. Sooner or later every President (unless he be a complacent Harding) quarrels with Congress, but never has there been such a bitter and continuous strife as between the Executive and the national legislature in this administration. Mr. Hoover had few personal friends and supporters in Congress when elected; even his party leaders give him to-day only the most necessary support, and attack him privately without the slightest restraint. As I write the news comes that the Senate has hastily passed the Bonus Bill, which entitles veterans of the world war to borrow upon their certificates of adjusted compensation up to fifty per cent. of their value. The Treasury and the President have both opposed this measure as one that might cost the former as much as $700,000,000 when it is facing a deficit of at least $375,000,000 at the end of the fiscal year June 30th—the well-informed correspondent of the London *Times* in Washington declares that the deficit will certainly go to $500,000,000. The Senate rushed this Bill through in a few hours after receiving it from the House of Representatives in order to put it into the President's hands more than ten full legislative days prior to the Constitutional adjourn-

ment on March 4th. Otherwise the President could have killed it by what is known as a "pocket-veto"—by not acting at all. Now, the Senate believes, he will have to veto it by his signature and return it to Congress, prior to its adjournment, so that it may be repassed over his veto, if sufficient votes are available, and thus becomes law despite him.

This struggle is well worth watching for several reasons. Primarily because the United States is the only remaining nation of importance whose Government refuses direct aid to unemployed. Thus the fully six million workless there are compelled to subsist on private charity or the unregulated, spasmodic donations of the several municipalities. It is perfectly obvious to most thoughtful persons, however, that if the present economic crisis lasts two years more, and the number of unemployed continues much as at present, not even the unsurpassed generosity of the American people will be equal to assuming the burden which almost everywhere else is recognised to be the concern of the central Government. The Hoover theory that doles must be fought off at any cost may soon be face to face with some grave realities. Thus, only ten days ago, the unemployed in St. Paul stormed the Minnesota State Capitol, drove out the legislators, and for two hours occupied the House of Representatives and listened to speeches by their leaders. Although Mr. Hoover, in the radio talk already quoted, stated that "never before in conditions of depression has there been so little social disorder," there have been riots in a number of cities, notably in Boston, where, according to the dispatches, two clergymen were arrested among the demonstrators. America is the most lawless of civilised countries; life has become very cheap, and murders go practically unpunished. If conditions should become extremely bad, there is every prospect of a repetition of the bloody riots of 1877, when large forces of militia and regulars were necessary to restore order.

More important in the long run is the question whether any far-reaching political changes may be looked for as a result of this crisis. For years the small group of Liberals who have tried to organise a new party, and the Socialists who have vainly tried to make theirs a powerful one, have encouraged themselves with the sorry hope that if bad times came the public would cease to be absorbed in radios, movies, sports and motor-cars, and would once more begin to think in political terms. The time of stress is here; it remains to be seen whether it will lead to a turn towards liberalism or radicalism, or a renewed demand for such a programme of very limited social control as that upon which Colonel Roosevelt stood when he ran for President in 1912, and, by splitting the Republican Party, gave Woodrow Wilson the Presidency and his opportunity in the World War. So far no new leader has arisen; there is only one national figure in the Socialist Party, Norman Thomas, candidate for the Presidency in 1928, who is a man of growing promise and power. There is no doubt that a man with but a part of Colonel Roosevelt's talent for publicity and for creating a tremendous popular following could today rouse the masses in short order. The small committee, headed by Professor John Dewey, which for nearly two years has been seeking to call a Liberal Party into being, has met with encouraging response wherever it has stated its aims. It lacks, however, not only the great leader but also funds—and it takes enormous sums to campaign over half a continent among 120 millions of people.

Meanwhile the country remains without a genuine political opposition, since there is not a hair's breadth of difference between the Republican and Democratic parties. Both are devoid of constructive, progressive leadership; both are imperialistic; both committed to a large fleet; and both are owned body and soul by the great industrialists and the protectionists, who pay their way between and during elections. It is an extraordinary fact that in no one of the two leading parties can be found an entire group which advocates a certain doctrine or measure. Party lines have ceased to divide protectionists, prohibitionists, imperialists, conservatives, yes, the few radicals. They can be found in both the big camps.

Meanwhile the fate of Mr. Hoover is in the balance. In sixteen months he will be up for renomination, if he should still seek it. Ordinarily a President, by his control of the huge number of offices not in the permanent civil service, and of the purchasable Southern Negro delegation to the Republican National Convention, can dictate his renomination. Whether one so unpopular as Mr. Hoover will be able to do this remains to be seen. It appears hardly possible, if his strife with Congress and the industrial depression should continue. It is not without significance that an orchestra clad in rags and tatters is now touring the Middle West labelled "Hoover Prosperity Band." Perhaps the leaders of the party will feel next year as did one of them when asked, just prior to President Harding's death, whether it would be necessary to renominate the President: "Of course; no one else in the United States could possibly be found to defend his administration!"

If Republican disaster seems inevitable in 1932, the leaders may prefer to make Mr. Hoover the victim. Certainly, if times do not improve, the Democrats should be certain winners—if they nominate a good and trustworthy candidate, and do not make the fatal error of again nominating ex-Governor "Al" Smith. For in the Congressional elections last November no fewer than seven million voters left the Republicans and went over to the Democrats.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD.

A COUNCIL OF STATE

IT is curious that a humble scribbler, who would not dare, when he is awake, to speak to a Minister of the Crown, should behave in a most presumptuous way in his dreams. No doubt Dr. Freud could supply some offensive explanation; but I prefer to attribute my dream the other night to a confused memory of parliamentary debates and an overdose of the Sunday Press before retiring to bed.

I dreamt that I had called a conference of eminent statesmen to consider the industrial and economic situation and to discuss the advisability of forming a National Government to meet the crisis. It seems odd to me now that, even in my sleep, I should have been calm and collected on such an occasion, but I was, in fact, as bold as brass.

"I am obliged to you, gentlemen," said I, "for your attendance here to-night, and I will ask Mr. Snowden, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to open the discussion. He spoke recently of the gravity of the position and of the need for sacrifices. Perhaps he will be good enough to tell us what sacrifices he suggests."

"Nothing could be viler," said Mr. Snowden, fiercely, "than the misrepresentations in the Liberal and Tory Press that I meant anything at all by my speech. The situation is serious. Nobody can deny it. It was necessary that somebody should say so. But it is a monstrous calumny to suggest that the Government proposes to do anything about it."

"There is nothing you can do," remarked Mr. Baldwin, sympathetically, "unless you are prepared to introduce a tariff."

"Hear! Hear!" exclaimed Mr. Churchill. "What the country needs is a ten per cent. revenue duty on all manufactured imports. That will stimulate industry and enable us to balance the Budget without increasing direct taxation."

"Nonsense!" cried Mr. Chamberlain. "A ten per cent. tariff all round would be no more use to the iron and steel trade than a sick headache. What industry requires is a rough-and-ready barrier behind which we can investigate the situation. An emergency tariff, if it is to be of any

use, must protect. It must not be anything so crude or so feeble as a ten per cent. duty all round."

"What industry requires," replied Mr. Churchill, hotly, "is, above all, to be relieved from the burden of political uncertainty, and your rough-and-ready emergency tariff would create the maximum of uncertainty. Besides, the most urgent need at present is revenue, and the more protective your tariff is the less it will yield."

"What industry requires," cried Lord Beaverbrook, who had been listening with growing impatience to the discussion, "is the taxation of foreign foodstuffs——."

"Mad dog!" shouted Lord Hailsham.

"Order, order," said I. "Really, gentlemen, you appear to be too divided to form a Conservative Government let alone a National Government."

"So they are," said Mr. Lloyd George. "Footlers, I call them. I prefer the toddlers, who wouldn't do so badly if they were not so frightened of the frigid penguins in the City of London. Ever since the war the Money Barons have been wrong in their advice—— "

"Who made those Barons?" asked Mr. Churchill.

"Never mind," retorted Mr. Lloyd George. "I know what you want. You want to be leader of the Conservative Party. But let me remind you that there is not yet a vacancy on the throne."

"What the country needs," exclaimed Lord Beaverbrook, "is an end of Baldwinism."

"Muzzle him!" cried Lord Hailsham.

I felt obliged to intervene, and I said: "We have met for a serious purpose, gentlemen. Let us assume for the moment that we have formed a National Government. Now what ought we to do about Unemployment Insurance?"

"The present Government have done the only thing possible with that," said Mr. Churchill. "By every device, every dodge, every shift, and almost every turpitude they have managed to keep on paying for the longest time in the loosest fashion the largest doles to the largest number. I don't blame them. I don't blame anybody for not committing suicide. And a National Government would have to do the same thing for the same reason."

"Surely it would be better for the country to get people into employment than to pay them to rot in idleness," exclaimed Mr. Lloyd George.

"Yes, but how are you going to do it?" asked Mr. MacDonald.

"By Empire Free Trade," cried Lord Beaverbrook.

"Shoot him!" shouted Lord Hailsham.

I was about to call him to order when Sir Oswald Mosley began to speak.

"What is needed," he said, "is national planning—— "

"And Party loyalty," interjected Mr. MacDonald.

"Hear! Hear!"

"Hear! Hear!"

The applause came from Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Lloyd George.

"I suggest," continued Sir Oswald, "that we should have five dictators—— " ("Why five?" asked Mr. Churchill) "—say, for instance, Lady Cynthia, Mr. Brown, Mr. Strachey, Mr. Oliver Baldwin, and myself."

"To whom would you dictate?" asked Mr. MacDonald.

"To one another, of course," said Mr. Lloyd George.

"The question which we have to face," said Mr. MacDonald, "is whether we are going to stand shoulder to shoulder so as to come through these trying days together—come out triumphant, with heads, maybe, 'bloody but unbowed'—or—— "

"Or stand face to face, and come out with noses bloody and unblown——."

I looked round hastily, but could not see who had interrupted so rudely. It was obvious, however, that the time had come when this futile conversation must end.

"I have a suggestion to make," said I. "Everybody appreciates the public spirit and sense of duty which has kept you all in political life; but I venture to think that the time has come when you can all render better service to the community in other spheres. You, Mr. MacDonald, are peculiarly fitted for the office of Lord High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland. Mr. Churchill is, I understand, a skilled bricklayer, and that is a far less dangerous occupation than dropping bricks. Mr. Lloyd George should certainly stand for the Presidency of the United States on the Democratic ticket—— "

"And what do you want me to do?" enquired Mr. Snowden grimly.

"For you," said I, "there is ample scope for a career of usefulness as Private Secretary to that talented lady, Mrs. Philip Snowden."

I was so startled at hearing myself make this impudent reply that I awoke, and the reader will agree that it was time I did.

PETER IBBETSON.

IN SPAIN: CABBAGES AND KINGS

THE curious events of the last few weeks in Spain have proved—if further proof was needed—that the Constitution of 1876 is indeed outworn. They have also awakened in many a grudging admiration for the statecraft of Alfonso XIII., and a suspicion that the paths of Spanish democracy may not be made straight for many years to come. It would be wrong to say that the crisis was dominated by the King, but his, at least, was the guiding hand which skilfully replaced a discredited dictatorship by a cabinet of more moderate Monarchists, demonstrating on the way—for the benefit of the waverers—that the left-wing had been given a fair opportunity of which it had failed to take advantage.

General Berenguer's original policy was doomed from the moment when the Liberal-Monarchists, led by the Count of Romanones and Señor Garcia Prieto, were converted to the principle of *Cortes Constituyentes*. They thus followed in the wake of the anti-Monarchist groups, who one after another had declared their intention of "abstaining" from the elections as long as these were controlled by General Berenguer, and were only for normal Cortes. The Liberals were still prepared to go to the polls in March, but they had come, they declared in mid-February, to look on the normal Cortes as a formality which was to be cleared out of the way as quickly as possible for the real business of constitution-making.

Upon this, it was obvious that the March elections were not only dangerous (they had always been that), but useless to the Monarchy. Who realised this first—the King or General Berenguer? The question makes one long for a glimpse into the future, with the power to read the yet-to-be-written memoirs of either of the two actors in that short scene in the Ministry of War. General Berenguer was confined to his room with a poisoned foot. The King came in person to see him, and in the course of half an hour's conversation the two of them planned—or one of them imposed—the termination of the "passive dictatorship," the abandonment of the elections, and the formation of a new ministry under a new premier. General Berenguer then disappeared into the background and quietly mobilised his troops, with the object of forestalling a possible *coup d'état* by some unauthorised general. The King occupied the centre of the stage. His first step was to telephone to Paris and offer the mission of forming a cabinet to Señor Santiago Alba. Señor Alba's political influence is remarkable, considering that he fled from Spain on the first news of General Primo de Rivera's *pronunciamento* seven and a half years ago, and that he steadfastly refuses to return to his country until he is convinced that his popularity there is unanimous. He has, however, contributed regularly to the Press, and an extensive note from him, affirming his belief in the necessity of *Cortes Constituyentes*, was published by

all the Spanish newspapers a few days before General Berenguer's resignation. This kept his name prominently before the public. He politely refused the King's offer, and declined to take a portfolio, even by proxy. But he indicated that Señor Melquiades Alvarez, head of the Reformist party, and Señor Sanchez Guerra—who is also a Reformist, though less a man of the left—had his entire support in their programmes. The King finally charged the second of these with the task of forming a ministry, though not until he had consulted politicians of all shades of opinion.

The strange ups-and-downs, the mixture of enmity and tolerance, which characterise Spanish politics could find no better example than in the career of Señor Guerra. He had held several portfolios, including that of Prime Minister, in pre-Dictatorship days; he was head of the Liberal-Conservative Party, and a loyal supporter of the Monarchy. General Primo de Rivera, before coming to power, looked upon him as his political leader, "in the little that I had had to do with politics." After the *coup d'état*, Señor Guerra passed into the ranks of the Dictator's enemies. He became, also, an opponent of the Monarchy, and was one of the first to advocate *Cortes Constituyentes* as a necessary solution of the crisis that would occur when the Dictator resigned. He lived very simply in a hotel on the Boulevard Raspail in Paris, which he left in January, 1929, in order to place himself at the head of a military rising in Valencia. The rising was abortive, and Señor Guerra surrendered himself to the authorities, and was confined on board a cruiser in Valencia harbour. While there he occupied himself in making a Spanish translation of Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, and incidentally had the good fortune to win a prize of sixty thousand pesetas in a State lottery. His trial, with that of the other prisoners, began before a Council of War in October, 1929. The arguments of the defence were remarkably bold, and the fact that they were admitted and led to the acquittal of all the civilian and most of the military prisoners says much for the leniency of the Spanish Dictatorship. The principal points were:

(1) That whatever Señor Guerra's intentions in coming to Valencia, they were not translated into acts, and therefore he had committed no punishable offence. (2) That the case for the prosecution rested entirely upon the prisoner's statements. (No attempt was made to substantiate these by other evidence.) (3) That the Dictatorship being an illegal usurpation of the people's sovereignty, movements against it were permissible, so long as they aimed at the restoration of the normal regime.

Such phrases as this were used to describe the Dictator's *coup d'état*: "On September 13th, 1923, a military rebellion occurred in Barcelona. . . ." Few dictatorships, even when they are drawing to their end, would suffer a prisoner to justify himself by such arguments. It is worth noting that Señor Guerra's advocate, Señor de Viguri, was afterwards Minister of Economy in General Berenguer's cabinet.

Señor Guerra, then an avowed opponent of absolute Monarchy, was requested by the King on February 16th to form a ministry. After consultations which ranged from the Liberal-Monarchists to the Republican-Socialists interned in the Model Prison at Madrid for their share in the Jaca rising, he completed on paper his cabinet and his programme. Armed with this he set out for the Royal Palace, to which the King had just returned after a short visit to General Berenguer. Both he and the political leaders with whom he had been in touch were optimistic of success.

"Is the list of your new cabinet ready?" a reporter asked him.

"Naturally. And if, after my interview with the King, there is occasion to communicate it to the Press, I will do so."

"Will your conversation with the King be a long one?"

"I do not know. I expect it will."

Thirty-five minutes later Señor Guerra emerged from the Palace and made this unexpected statement:

"After my numerous conferences of yesterday I formed the impression that I could not constitute the Government I desired. . . . Since I am not a man whose eyes are shut to realities—even though I have the list of the ministry in my pocket—I have told the King that I must decline the mission with which he had charged me." Señor Guerra added that he was deeply grateful to the King for the personal sympathy which he had shown, as well as for the fact that His Majesty had not raised the slightest objection to the convocation of *Cortes Constituyentes*. Why, then, did the projected cabinet fall through? The only answer seems to be that King Alfonso, with superb diplomacy, persuaded his would-be Premier that his ministry was unacceptable, and yet managed to convey the impression that he had a perfectly open mind on constitutional reform.

The outcome is well known. Señor Alvarez, the Reformist leader with Republican leanings, was summoned to the Palace, but received no mandate. On the following day General Aznar formed his cabinet, which was a combination of Conservative-Monarchists (including General Berenguer), tempered by the two Liberal-Monarchists, Romanones and Garcia Prieto, but going no further to the left. The attempts of the King of Spain to find a ministry might be compared to the negotiations with which the President of the French Republic is familiar—with one important difference. In France it is not enough to form a ministry. A majority for it must also be found in the two Chambers. But in Spain there is no question of this, because at present the Chambers do not exist. The strange spectacle is thus offered of a cabinet constructed on the old parliamentary principles, without a parliament to approve or condemn its acts.

To whom are the new ministers responsible? To the people? But the people, unrepresented, cannot effectively demand an account of their stewardship. To the monarch? In this case the King has become absolute, and the members of the cabinet are no more than his council. But it is idle to theorise upon the legality of the actual Spanish Government. The Constitution, already decrepit in 1923, received its death-blow from General Primo de Rivera, after all. If that was not obvious before, recent events have made it so. Admiral Aznar's "cabinet" is best explained as a directorate of transition, which is to pave the way for a new constitution. Incidentally, it may yet save the Monarchy from extinction, provided no revolutionary movement intervenes.

GEOFFREY BRERETON.

THE TAILOR ORDERS HIS TOMB

THE will of a tailor was the subject of dispute in the Courts on Tuesday. He was a tailor who all his life had had "a passion for saving money that amounted to a mania." So great was his antipathy to spending that, when his wife died some years ago, he refused to pay—or even to contribute to—her funeral expenses. Prudent in some respects, imprudent in others, he had thirteen children, but he would not permit even so imposing a family to stand in the way of his habit of saving. The £3,400 that he left was accumulated, we are told, "at the expense of his wife and family, whom he systematically starved, overworked or beat." Living in recent years with two of his daughters, he compelled them to "sleep on a broken couch while he had a proper bed." He had by this time become blind, and had evidently begun to meditate on death. Having lived meanly all his life, he saw in the tomb an escape into a more magnificent existence. He had lived like a pauper; he would lie in his grave like an emperor. The chrysalis miser, at the last rattle of death, would be magically translated into a butterfly spendthrift. He had never been a friend to anybody, but he would now be generous to him-

self. With heroic determination, the blind old man sent for a neighbour, and dictated his will.

Part of it ran like this :

> The funeral expenses to be fixed at £100, and to be in first-class style, with motor conveyances for same. Also I wish to have paid the sum of £2 to all my friends attending the funeral for their expenses incurred.
>
> I leave £500 in order to have a first-class tombstone, a beautifully kept flower-bed, and an ornamented monument, preferably a broken column, with all necessary inscription on same.
>
> Also a further sum of £400 for upkeep and beautifying of grave, tombstone, and monument for the space of thirty to forty years or more, and incidental expenses attached. This sum, £1,000, to be the first charge on the estate, and take precedence over all other allocations.

There is something suggestive of a noble ambition in these crabbed sentences. Here was a man who had never enjoyed anything first class in his life, and who at length had a vision of going first class to Heaven. He had never, we may be sure, had a first-class meal, or travelled in a first-class compartment on the railway. It is almost certain that he had never stayed at a first-class hotel or bought a stall at a theatre, or paid for a bottle of champagne, or unpocketed a sixpence for a weekly paper. He had counted every halfpenny lost that was not saved, and an extra farthing on the price of the loaf weighed on him like the American debt. Possibly it was the realisation that he was going where there is neither saving nor spending that convinced him in a flash that he might as well now for the first time and the last taste the deliciousness of spending. Or, perhaps, he may all his life have been hugging the secret glory of being housed well after death. What a change from his penurious home, with his two daughters lying on the broken couch! In life he could not afford to buy a bunch of shabby chrysanthemums for the table; as compensation he would sleep in death under a beautifully-kept flower-bed. And he would be borne to his flower-bed " in first-class style " with " motor conveyances " following after, the world standing still in admiration of the spectacle. It was a day for largesse, and he who had never spent two shillings on making anybody rejoice that he was alive was now prepared to pay two pounds to anyone who mourned that he was dead. But, if Scrooge was transformed by the prospect of death, he was still only half-converted. He was willing to spend money, but, though other people must have some of it, he remained Scrooge enough to wish to spend most of it on himself. In other words, he was what is called a " good fellow." He left part of it to charities, for to leave money to charity redounds more to a man's honour (in print) than to leave it, in the conventional fashion, to his family. But even the published announcement of a charitable bequest brings a man but fleeting glory in comparison with the endurance of stone and an epitaph well and truly graven. Hence the tailor, desiring to be columnarly extant, placed before charities the necessity of " a first-class tombstone " with " an ornamented monument, preferably a broken column, with all necessary inscriptions on same." Beneath such ponderous splendour, he could sleep with the smile of contentment—nay, of bliss—on his face for ever, the pathos of the broken column touching the exquisitive chord of self-pity, and the epitaph performing the first duty of an epitaph—to inform the world how much it lost in losing the ninth part of a man supine beneath. There are men who tremble with joy, like that of first love, at the prospect of shaking hands with a great author : there are others who are exalted by an introduction to an Oxford or Cambridge Blue; there are more who perspire with delight on sitting beside a peer at table. But the tailor had a heart set above such melting vanities. His grandeur must be, not momentary, but perpetual. Stone that outlasts flesh and blood should proclaim his eminence even when he was a skeleton.

> And in the dust be equal made
> With the poor crooked scythe and spade

—the tailor at least knew better than that. Equality may lay its blighting hand on the society of the living, but there can be no equality among monuments. If you have saved £8,000, your survival after death—in a graveyard—will be both more certain and more splendacious than if you had died a pauper. The glories, not only of our blood and state, but of our banking accounts, are among the most substantial things on earth when transmuted into monumental mason's stone.

To the philosopher the desire for lasting conspicuousness after death seems vanity, and if it were possible for us all to be philosophers I should agree that the desire is not one to be commended. But the omens do not suggest that, within any measurable period, the world will be populated by philosophers, and if a man's vanity lies in being conspicuous in a churchyard, I cannot see that it differs in any serious degree from the vanity that consists in being conspicuous on the platform, or in the City, or in any of the trades, professions, or pursuits of the living. Self-love rarely ever took a more modest form than in the desire for an immodest burial. If men had always restricted their self-love to their monuments we should have been spared the disastrous egoisms of history—the wars of the conquerors and the wars of the conquered. We should have been spared the minor plague of self-advertisement that has broken out like a rash over the potentially fair face of democracy. If it were made a principle that no one should be allowed to advertise himself till he was safely stowed underground, what a purification of almost all branches of living would immediately result! And what economies! We should all take to saving for our tombs, and on fire with self-love we should save till even Mr. Snowden was satisfied. And in time he and his successors would be able to tax our gravestones. There would be little left to tax. We should have given up all our vices but the vice of dying.

It may be thought that this is too optimistic a view of the matter, since the tailor made his tombstone an altar on which he sacrificed the happiness of his family. But the tailor did not confine his self-love to his splendour in the grave. He loved the absence of luxury in life as selfishly as other men love luxury. He was as ambitious of rule in his home as ever was a slave-owner of rule on his estate. There is nothing in his life that we need emulate except his posthumous self-love and self-advertisement. I confess I cannot rise to such heights of virtue as to ask nothing more of life than a broken column in the corner of a graveyard. My selfishness as a living animal is so much greater than my selfishness as a prospective skeleton that I am far more concerned about where I shall dine next Tuesday than about where I shall lie in earth till my skull is severed from my bones. To sacrifice to-day to to-morrow—is that not the rule of all good moralists and most good economists? Unhappily, I never could do it. The tailor, in a measure, could and did.

Y. Y.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY

IT would have surprised a citizen of Preston or Blackburn or Rochdale or Oldham to be told in the winter of 1862 that the Cotton Famine was the best thing that had ever happened to his native town. Over a million people depended on the cotton industry, which was half paralysed. In Blackburn 15,000 workers were unemployed and 36,000 persons were living on legal or charitable relief. In Preston the figures were still higher. In Rochdale more than half the population was in this condition. By Christmas of that year the unemployed cotton workers were estimated at about a quarter of a million, and half a million people were receiving relief. The Poor Rates had trebled and Parliament had passed an Act to spread out the burden over larger areas. Vast sums had been raised by subscriptions. The distress of Lancashire had attracted sympathy from all parts of the world, for the world seemed to be watching a terrible tragedy. Yet

Blackburn, Oldham, Rochdale and Preston were all better places to live in after the tragedy than before.

The English people, on whom this calamity had fallen, had made a sensational success of its commercial and industrial development, and had treated everything else as relatively unimportant. Hence it had been found very difficult to secure any attention to the needs of civilisation except such needs as were directly served by economic progress. It was only too easy to obtain money for building railways, but it was very difficult to obtain any money for building sewers. A citizen of the new industrial towns would have felt it an outrage that his town was not put into touch with the centres of industry by the new railways, but he was scarcely moved by the filth in its streets, or its lack of drains and water. The state of Newcastle, as Palmerston said, might make a civilised man shudder, but in that case there were not a great many civilised people among the well-to-do classes of Newcastle. England, described by Boulton in the twenties as steam-mill mad, was now railway mad. Delane, who fought a gallant fight against the predominant spirit of the time, said that Macaulay's New Zealander would find that England had brought herself to the verge of bankruptcy by building railways when 300 streets in a rich district of the metropolis were without a sewer, and that the Great Plague would revive for want of half the money that was readily forthcoming for a railway or a mine in France or Germany. Everybody wanted to put his money into railways and few people wanted any money put into health or education. Those few fought an uphill battle against the forces of property and industry: forces well represented in the House of Commons by George Hudson, called by his admirers the Railway King and by Carlyle the Big Swollen Gambler. *The Times* said that railways were his meat and drink, and in that unfortunately he was not peculiar. In 1848 a Public Health Bill was put on the Statute Book after a prolonged struggle, but it was very difficult to get public authorities to spend any money on civilising their towns or to get public men to recommend it. The nation had been told the terrible truth about its towns by the Health of Towns Commission, which had reported that, out of fifty towns examined, only six had decent water, and not one had decent drains, but Parliament had been slow to give local authorities effective powers and still slower to give them effective help. All that the taxpayer was asked to do was to lend money at five per cent. It is not surprising that towns which spent so little on necessities spent, as a rule, nothing on amenities. The largest of the industrial towns lived at a lower level than a small-sized town under the Antonines in respect of the grace, beauty and happiness of its public life. A citizen of a Roman town in Spain or Gaul would have been ashamed of the mean look of Manchester or Leeds.

Some years ago there was a craze for starvation as a tonic to the system, for it was held that the phagocytes, deprived of their natural employment, looked about them for food and scavenged in turn the several organs of the body. The Cotton Famine served this purpose in Lancashire. In 1863 the Government of the day represented by C. P. Villiers at the Poor Law Board and Sir George Grey at the Home Office decided that some employment must be found for the cotton workers, and they turned to the neglected towns. It was obvious to anybody who thought about them that there was plenty of scope, if it was once admitted that drains, streets, parks and water—though no doubt less important than mills and railways—had some relation to the happiness and comfort of man. A report drawn up for Villiers by Thomas Baines put the case. "The towns which have sprung up so rapidly in Lancashire and Cheshire during the present century have generally been built without a plan, everyone doing what seemed good in his own eyes, or what suited his own immediate interest. . . . Towns thus built are necessarily irregular in form and deficient in many arrangements, and the present time would prove a favourable opportunity for effecting great improvements." The Government sent to Lancashire a well-known engineer, Sir Robert Rawlinson, the chief inspector under the Public Health Acts, and he reported that a million and a half could be spent very usefully on these purposes. He pointed out the difficulties in the way of proceeding under the existing law. A local authority had to proceed by private Bill or adopt the Local Government Act, and in either case there were delays and expenses. The Government, acting on his advice, brought in a Bill to enable local authorities to borrow at 3½ per cent. and set aside a million and a quarter for this purpose. The Bill was received with general favour; a few members objected in the name of economy. But Cobden gave the Bill his strong support, and called on the local authorities to act with vigour. "It is as important to devise means of employment as to provide the money. To keep these people for another twelve months in idleness would be demoralising to them, and I would almost prefer seeing them take a voyage over the Atlantic with the certainty of their coming back when the cotton trade recovers than to see them languish thus in idleness." In the following year further provision was made and altogether nearly two millions was so spent.

The figures of this experiment look insignificant to-day. In Rawlinson's report in 1863 the number of persons employed was put at between 7,000 and 8,000, representing with their families some 38,000 persons. (According to Kay Shuttleworth's estimate the number of men and youths out of work was 50,000, the number of boys and girls being 75,000, and of women 125,000.) In his report of 1864 Rawlinson said that the scheme had provided sustenance for from 30,000 to 50,000 persons. The cotton workers, unaccustomed to spade work, were mixed with skilled men and worked under careful superintendence, and Rawlinson reported that they had been unexpectedly versatile. Nor does the sum spent, amounting in all to two millions, make a very impressive figure. Yet the results were astonishing. Rawlinson, writing when the experiment was in progress, said: "Many of the chief towns of the district will be remodelled. In Blackburn, where public works afforded employment to nearly 1,000 operatives, who were thereby enabled to maintain themselves and their families during the whole of last winter, £36,000 has been already expended; 18,086 lineal yards of sewers have been constructed and 51,388 yards of paving and flagging provided; the public park has been greatly improved; the bed of the river, which was in a very foul condition, has been cleansed and pitched with stone, and some miles of streets have been reformed." In his next report he said: "The public works undertaken in Lancashire will, when executed, promote sanitary arrangements to an extent which it is not possible to describe fully in this report." The sum was spread over some fifty-five towns and districts. Blackburn, Oldham, Preston, Rochdale and Bolton either made parks for the first time or improved such parks as they had, and nearly half a million was spent on sewers. To understand what a change an expenditure that looks to-day so modest could make in the Lancashire towns we must remember that when Tom Taylor, the well-known editor of *Punch*, who was at one time Secretary to the Board of Health, gave evidence before the Sanitary Commission in 1869, he said that the sums borrowed by local authorities for these purposes under the Public Health Acts during the ten years 1848-1858 came to less than three millions. The amount spent on these objects in such towns as Blackburn and Ashton-under-Lyne during these two years exceeded the whole of the debt they had incurred before that time.

Our position to-day differs in many respects from that of England in 1862. But to-day it is true as it was then that "the law of England wisely and justly provides that the destitute poor shall be fed, whether they can be employed or not." To-day a Delane noting our patience with the slums in the town and the cottage famine in the country would think that we had been as mad about motor roads as his age about railroads. To-day if a Rawlinson travelled

over England, he would report that our new roads might be made less disfiguring by planting, that we are still woefully poor in playgrounds, that in 1924 the Ministry of Health reported that only a quarter of our villages had a piped water supply, and that in town and country alike the housing problem is still acute. He would report that whereas at that time the unemployed were chiefly cotton workers, they now include bricklayers, miners, and labourers of every kind. If Cobden were in Parliament he might repeat his summons to the local authorities to be bold in embarking on such improvements as are urgently needed, in the interest of he men who languish in idleness. It would surely not pass the wit of man to devise a method of using some of the great mass of unemployed workers to make England a better place to live in, that would not bring our national finances to catastrophe.

J. L. HAMMOND.

THE BURDEN OF DISARMAMENT

WHEN nations, groaning underneath the weight
Of swollen fleets and armies grown too great,
Resolved at last to try what might be gained
From limiting the forces they maintained,
We thought (poor, simple souls, intent on peace),
That "limitation" sounded like "decrease":
We little dreamed what millions must be spent
To bear the burden of disarmament.

Yet scan your daily paper, and you'll note
France must increase her military vote
Simply because her army cuts implied
A frontier yet more strongly fortified,
While wicked Germany, disarmed by war,
Becomes by magic stronger than before.

To France a naval limitation means
New battleships and larger submarines;
To Italy it means a new advance
To bridge the gap between herself and France.
Great Britain and Japan with anxious care,
"Yardstick" in hand, survey the squabbling pair,
Lest European scaling-up should cause
Recourse to London's "escalator clause."
The harassed Senate of the U.S.A.,
While funds are falling, ponder with dismay,
Amidst their votes for pensions and for charity,
The ghastly cost of building up to parity.

We, simple souls, can draw no clear deduction,
Save universal, genuine reduction.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

BANKS AND SLUMS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I suppose it is always a healthy interest which leads us to bring an ounce of fact as commentary upon a ton of theory; so I invite your readers to reflect on the following:—first, that for many a long day it has been common ground among politicians, economists and reformers—all humanitarians—that there is a vast work awaiting the building trade, plus capital, to rebuild the slums. But to no material extent are the slums rebuilt. What are rebuilt are the banks, to the tune of millions of pounds—partly for investment—largely for ostentation and from rivalry. Round about the Bank of England the instances of rebuilding are startling in their redundant magnificence and spaciousness; but all over London and in every provincial town there is the same evidence of more and more banks: more and more regardless of cost.

Of course, the explanation is simple. Our bank managers pose as experts in industrial and even national economy; but I think we should be unwise in giving them credit for being more than astute money-lords. Had they had any claim to look at the situation from a national point of view, they would at the least have lamented that although there was no need to multiply banks in number or the existing ones by such lavish expenditure, while the slums remain the slums; still, as they, the big five, have the money, and the race for corner sites and superb head offices has got under way, they must each fight for sites in all new blocks, lest the others outstrip them. What are the slums to them!

The talk of over-production at last resolves itself into this:—that, given a better distribution of purchasing power, there would be production of things the people need: better houses: better education: better food and leisure. The trades follow the demands of wealth. I do not know on what ground the banks restrict their public services as they do. In my town Saturday is the great day for trade, which goes on unabated till 8 p.m. at least: there are, all within a stone's throw, six branches of the big five—*they all close at noon!*

I do not think the cry to nationalise the banks, and to give facilities for municipal banks, is likely to die down until some chairman arises who will put before his proprietors a truly national policy in matters where the public can easily judge—then there may be a greater disposition to accept the judgment on more recondite matters.

May I conclude by wishing great success to the new journal?—Yours, etc.,

A. G. SAYERS.

Devonshire Club,
St. James's Street, S.W. 1.
February 20th.

EPSTEIN

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am entirely, and enthusiastically, in accord with Sir Michael Sadler's suggestion that Mr. Epstein's Genesis "would look superb in a glade of a hill-forest in Tahiti," and if he will start a fund to defray the necessary expenses of transportation to the favoured locality I shall be only too glad to contribute a guinea—or even more.—Yours, etc.,

LEE OF FAREHAM.

White Lodge,
Richmond Park, London.
February 23rd.

THE DESTINY OF THE UNIVERSE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Many of the writers in the Press, both daily and weekly, seem to be hypnotised by the interesting and instructive writings of Professor Jeans, whose delightful and confident style lures the uninitiated reader on, and produces on him an impression of scientific authority. We used to think of Science as the systematic statement of knowledge, but a large proportion of the recent writings of Professor Jeans is not knowledge, but the result of wild guessing. We may fairly say that we know for practical purposes the distance between the earth and the sun, and it is not likely that our error is greater than 1 per cent. Similarly, we probably know the distance of the nearest fixed star within about 10 per cent. But the figures which are used in the writings of Professor Jeans are so fantastic and imaginary that to apply the word "knowledge" to them is ridiculous. In speaking of the total number of stars, the distances of the nebulæ, and the length of time during which various kinds of stars have existed, several 0's might be removed from the figures without affecting the probability of the statement.

Let me refer to two problems: the absence of life, and the Destiny of the Universe. As to the absence of life in the Universe except upon the earth, we know that life, as we are acquainted with it, is impossible in the sun, although Camille Flammarion, the French astronomer, suggested that the souls of men at death fled to the sun, presumably to keep up its heat and light. The stars are suns and, therefore, it is as impossible that they should contain life as it is for our sun. But let us suppose an observer to be not more distant from us than the nearest star, roughly 4⅓ light-years. If that observer were supplied with the most perfect telescopes, spectroscopes and photographic cameras that we have or that we can conceive of, it would be quite impossible for him to become aware of the existence of the earth or any of the other planets of our system. Therefore, a large

number of the stars may have planetary systems without our ever knowing anything about their existence.

With regard to the statement of Professor Jeans as to the ultimate destiny of the Universe—that it is running down, and that at some distant period all the stars will have dissipated themselves into the vast vacuum which now separates them the one from the other—it is merely a theory, and there is another theory not so improbable. As to the extinction of the heavenly bodies by dissipation, it is an unnecessary assumption because the objects which we are able to observe and study in various portions of the Universe are in, literally, all stages of their history. There are nebulæ which apparently form the raw material of future stellar systems, and there are stars which have passed through all the phases of their existence as sources of light and heat. Between the nebular phase and the final extinction of the star's light and heat, an utterly incalculable period of time must elapse. There are dead stars still holding together their mass, but no longer emitting sufficient light to reach our instruments, and now and then a collision takes place between either two dead stars or a live star and a dead star, which collision, through the production of enormous heat, causes either the whole of the two bodies or a portion of each of the two bodies to explode into a cloud of matter which is the birth of another star. This is the origin of the Novae, which was put forward and expounded by the late Professor A. W. Bickerton, the soundness and accuracy of whose theory were proved by his having exactly foretold the phenomena of Nova Persei. Professional astronomers have ignored this theory, but have never been able to controvert it. When it was laid before Lord Rayleigh, he admitted its probability, but said that the whole idea was too vast for him to deal with at his time of life. He meant that it suggests a cycle of perpetual renewal; dead stars originating new stars, which thus enter upon their new term of many millions of years in the forms in which we are able to study them. That this may be the history of many of the heavenly bodies seems much more in accordance with the conception of a wise and mighty Creator than the dreary prospect of a Universe running down to extinction.—Yours, etc.,

E. D. CECIL.

February 12th

THE ART OF BORROWING

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Well, *that*, presumably is the end of the International Art Exhibitions in London.

Of course there are those who see no good in them. Art, they say, is for the few. What use is it for crowds to invade Burlington House in search of an Invisible Ray, or to hold up their programmes in front of tiny Flemish pictures and say to one another "A fish in the foreground. My dear, where *is* the fish?" But that is not the only opinion; there are others who believe that the public derives pleasure and profit from these exhibitions. And now we know what the House of Lords thinks about it all.

Hitherto the British Museum and the National Gallery have not had power to lend "objects" for exhibitions. A Bill was introduced by the Government—on the advice of a Royal Commission set up by its predecessor—to enable them to make such loans abroad. The Trustees were to make their own regulations; and they were permitted, not ordered, to make loans. The Trustees—the list is headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord High Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons—are quite an impressive body; one would have thought that they could make sensible regulations—and keep them; that they—as much as the authorities of the National Portrait Gallery or the National Galleries in Scotland who are not fettered in any way—could have said "No" without starting a War. And when one considers how generous (at our suggestion) other countries have been to us of recent years in lending us specimens not only of their own art, but also of the art of other countries which were in their possession, the Bill did not seem to be an unreasonable measure of reciprocity.

But their Lordships had other views. The "objects," they said, must be "representative of British arts or crafts," and what was more, they must be "produced subsequent to the year 1600"—"objects" of earlier date are liable to be of special historical interest, or to be fragile. So Italy may lend us a Rubens; but our National Treasury may not lend them in return. Or Italy may lend us Leonardo's notebooks; but an early English Bible is quite another matter.

They would not even agree to "objects" being lent for display in our own Embassies. Good pictures might be burnt or ruined; bad ones would do no good; and anyhow, said a Peer, these pictures are the property of the British public and should always be here for the public to see. So the lower floors of Millbank and Trafalgar Square will continue to be crowded with unseen, immovable treasures—and also, so the Viscount Mersey hopes, with admiring foreigners: "Travel is very cheap and we want people to come." The Italians, of course, do not like tourists to go to Florence; that is why they lent us their pictures!

Such is reciprocity. Even the Soviet Government has lent treasures to the Persian Exhibition. That suggests another train of thought.

These foreigners can trust us. They know that we shall return their loans. They know that we shall return them undamaged.

True, there was some excitement when the Italian ship laden with Italian masterpieces was storm-tossed in the Bay of Biscay; but Italians had only to pause and reflect that Britannia rules even the waves. Besides, that is not the point; our galleries are safe—think of the Millbank floods a year or two ago—whereas, as the Viscount Mersey observed, "it would be a joke to lend to some places." Alas that the Archbishop, the Lord High Chancellor and the Speaker need an Act of Parliament to protect them against failure to detect a joke!

As for returning the trivial things which are lent to us ("Naturally it is the best advertisement in the world to lend to London," said the same Noble Lord, thinking, no doubt, of the startling success of the "Come to Britain" movement); why, of course, these foreigners know that we shall return them.

For example, the Elgin Marbles—ah!. no; they were a gift, I fancy?—Yours, etc.,

MILWARD KENNEDY.

February 17th

THIS SUNDAY BUSINESS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It was pleasing to read that you were not captivated by the proposal that the Sunday opening of cinemas should be left to local option. Having been a member of a big corporation just outside London for twenty years, experience has convinced me that your hesitation is justified. Once the decision of the vexed question is relegated to these local bodies it tends to become *the* issue of all elections—the cinema proprietors will take care of that—to the exclusion of other subjects far more relevant to the important, not to say vital, duties they are really appointed to fulfil.

"Shall Cinemas be Open on Sundays?" swallows up such questions (far more morally pressing even to ardent Sabbatarians I should have thought) as "Shall Existing Slums continue to be Open All the Year Round, Sundays included?" which ought to have become very topical indeed since the passing of the Labour Government's excellent Slum Clearance Act.

It is hard for a man or woman well qualified by experience and training to administer Public Health and Education Acts to find themselves defeated at the poll because they are not deemed "sound," one way or the other, on Sunday opening. Under this single electoral test I have seen reactionaries and ignoramuses elected while far better candidates from the efficient administration point of view are rejected. This is a heavy loss to good government.

Such a matter should not be sent to bodies elected for quite other purposes, and still less should they be given the delicate duty of acting as film censors. I can conceive of no body less qualified to act in such a capacity, and no suggestion is more likely to put sand or even granite into the municipal machine. Let the House of Commons take its courage into its own hands and decide the issue for the nation and not pusillanimously pass it on to bodies so little equipped for the purpose.

Further, let Sabbatarians note that local option means an inevitable increase in Sunday travelling. Such an outcome of their religious fervours must surely be unacceptable.

If cinemas are open in one borough and not in another adjoining one, nothing will prevent that increasing number of people who, lacking other means of sensible entertainment, prefer cinemas to public-houses on Sunday, from taking a 'bus or tram journey thither. Surely such a prospect of increased traffic on the Lord's Day ought to harden the heart of the strictest Sabbatarian against lending countenance to any such weak subterfuge.

But one never knows—it is perhaps not so much the love of the Sunday as the hatred of these rivals of church and chapel, the cinemas, that actuates these pale modern survivals of the sound old Puritan.—Yours, etc., H. T. MUCKERIDGE.

22 Haling Park Road, South Croydon.
February 21st.

Miscellany

ALL ABOUT BOOKS

YOUR last letter ends with the following sentence: "The cold profile of Mont Blanc; falling snow; peasants and pine trees; a string of stout fellows roped together with alpenstocks—such is the prospect from my window; so for pity's sake draw your chair to the fire, take your pen in your hand and write me a long, long letter all about books." But you must realise that a long, long letter is apt to be exaggerated, inaccurate, and full of those irreticences and hyperboles which the voice of the speaker corrects in talk. A letter is not a review; it is not a considered judgment, but, on condition that you do not believe a word I say, I will scribble for an hour or two whatever comes into my head about books.

That it has been a very bad season goes without saying. The proof of it is that old Mr. Baddeley had read *Guy Mannering* for the fifty-eighth time. Never was Jane Austen in greater demand. Trollope, Dickens, Carlyle and Macaulay are all providing that solace, that security, that sense that the human heart does not change which our miserable age requires and our living authors so woefully fail to provide. When, therefore, the rumour spread that the diary of an old clergyman called Cole, who had gone to Paris in the autumn of 1765, was about to be published, and that Miss Waddell had put her brilliance and her erudition at our service, a purr of content and anticipation rose from half the arm-chairs of England. This Cole, moreover, was not anybody's Cole; he was Horace Walpole's Cole; nor does it need any pedantic familiarity with history to be aware that the autumn of 1765 was for one old blind woman in Paris the most excruciating, the most humiliating, the most ecstatic of her life. At last Horace Walpole had come—after what snubs, what humiliations, what bitter disappointments! At last Madame du Deffand would—not indeed see him in the flesh, but feel him with the spirit. He would be in the same room with her; he would talk his broken French; she would feel come over her that strange delight, that abasement, that ecstasy—call it not love, for love he would not have it called—which the presence of the elderly and elegant Horace never failed to inspire in a heart that had long out-lived any sensation but boredom, despair and disgust. It was in that very autumn that Cole chose to visit Paris. Cole, it seemed probable since Walpole liked him, would have eyes in his head; certainly he had a diary in his portmanteau. What revelations might one not expect? What confidences from one Englishman to another? And Horace Walpole was willing. Every day he sent his servant to ask Cole to dinner. And every day—it is incredible what the dead will do, but it is true—Cole preferred to go sightseeing. He went to Notre Dame; he went to the Sorbonne; he went to the Convent of that Virgin, to the Cathedral of this Saint. When he came home he sat down to digest and methodise what he had seen. He was too tired to dine with Mr. Walpole. So instead of revelations we have information. "On the right hand of the High Altar as one enters. . . . The dome of this church is very beautiful. . . . Over the door is a curious alto-relievo representing the Last Supper. . . ." That is what he writes about, and, of course, about the habits of the natives. The habits of the natives are disgusting; the women hawk on the floor; the forks are dirty; the trees are poor; the Pont Neuf is not a patch on London Bridge; the cows are skinny; morals are licentious; polish is good; cabbages cost so much; bread is made of coarse flour; Mr. Drumgold could not with patience mention the character of John James Rousseau; the Coles are distantly related to the Herberts; and a French turkey is about the size of an English hen. How natural it all is! How admirable Mr. Cole would be at home in his own parish! How gladly we will read sixteen volumes about life in Bletchley if Miss Waddell will print them! But the present volume is nothing short of torture. "Cole," one is inclined to cry, "if you don't give up sightseeing to-day, if you don't dine with Mr. Walpole, if you don't report every word he says, leaving Drumgold out of it altogether, if you don't turn the talk somehow upon Madame du Deffand, if you don't somehow tell us more about one of the most curious affairs of the heart that was ever transacted, or failing that, rake up a few odds and ends of interest about that amazing society that was playing spillikins on the verge of revolution, we will——" But what can we do? The dead have no sense whatever of what is due to posterity. Mr. Cole imperturbably pulls on his boots and proceeds to visit the Sorbonne.

Must one then read *Guy Mannering*, or take Jane Austen from the bookshelf? No, the advantage of belonging to a good library is that it is only upon very exceptional occasions that one need have recourse to the classics. New books, in fresh jackets, are delivered daily, and good books, too—*Things I Remember*, by the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, for instance, a very terrible book; *The Diary of a Somersetshire Parson*—a very absorbing book; *By Guess and by God*—a very exciting yet infinitely childish book; and *Scrutinies*, a collection of critical essays by various writers. But what kind of book is *Scrutinies*? That, indeed, I cannot tell you at the moment for the good reason that I have not read it; but you can guess from the title and a glance at the table of contents that it consists of articles by the tolerably young—Messrs. Alec Brown, B. Higgins, Mary Butts, Jack Lindsay, P. Quennell, Sherard Vines, C. Saltmarshe, and so on, upon the tolerably old—Messrs. Eliot, Huxley, Joyce, Laurence, Sitwell, Strachey, and so on. And if I hesitate to read beyond the title page at present it is for the very sound and simple reason that it is so much pleasanter to look upon the young than upon the old, the young who are fresh and pliable, who have not stood out in the storm and stiffened into attitudes and hardened into wrinkles. Beauty is theirs now, as soon the future will be theirs also. Let us, therefore, leave the figures of the elders where they stand and turn our bull's eye upon the advancing and victorious hordes of youth.

And what is our first impression as we look? A very strange one. How orderly they come! One could swear that they are all arrayed in troops, and all march in step, and all halt, charge and otherwise behave themselves under the command of officers mounted upon chargers. As far as one can see—a bull's eye, it must be admitted, is not a very steady or comprehensive weapon—there is not a single straggler or deserter among them; there is no dancing or disorder; no wild voice cries alone; no man or woman breaks the ranks and leaves the troop and takes to the wilderness stirring desire and unrest among the hearts of his companions. All is orderly, all is preconcerted. If division there is, even that is regular. Camp is opposed to camp; the hostile parties separate, form, meet, fight, leave each other for dead upon the ground; rise, form and fight again. Classic is opposed to romantic; naturalist to metaphysic. Never was there such a sight since the world began. Never—as they come nearer this too becomes certain—were the young so well equipped as at present. No more respectable army has ever issued from the portals of the two great Universities—none more courageous, more instructed, more outspoken, more intolerant of humbug in all its forms, better fitted to deal pretence its death and falsity its finish—and yet (for all these flowers, of course, conceal a viper) there is a fatal defect; they do not lead, they follow. Where is the adventurous, the intolerant, the immensely foolish young

man or woman who dares to be himself? He or she must, of course, be there. He or she will in time to come make himself known. But at present, since he always keeps the ranks, since if he fights he is careful, like Sir Walter Blunt in *Henry the Fourth*, to wear the armour of his king, there is no knowing him at present from the seven hundred and fifty-five others who are similarly disguised.

If this is true, if there is now a uniformity and a drill and a discretion unknown before, what do you think can be the reason? In one word, and I have room for one only, and that is murmured in your private ear—education. Some years since, for reasons unknown, but presumably of value, it must have occurred to someone that the arts of reading and of writing can be taught. Degrees were given at the Universities to those who showed proficiency in their native tongue. And the teachers of the living language were not old and hoary; as fitted their subject they were young and supple. Persuasion sat on their tongues, and the taught, instead of mocking, loved their teachers. And the teachers took the manuscripts of the young and drew circles of blue chalk round this adjective and circles of red chalk round that adverb. They added in purple ink what Pope would have thought and what Wordsworth would have said. And the young, since they loved their teachers, believed them. Hence it came about that, instead of knowing that the sun was in the sky and the bird on the branch, the young knew the whole course of English literature from one end to another; how one age follows another; and one influence cancels another; and one style is derived from another; and one phrase is better than another. They took service under their teachers instead of riding into battle alone. All their marriages—and what are the five years between twenty and twenty-five in the life of a writer but years of courtship and wedding, of falling in love with words and learning their nature, how to mate them by one's own decree in sentences of one's own framing?—all their marriages were arranged in public; tutors introduced the couples; lecturers supervised the amours; and examiners finally pronounced whether the fruit of the union was blessed or the reverse. Such methods, of course, produce an erudite and eugenic offspring. But, one asks, turning over the honest, the admirable, the entirely sensible and unsentimental pages, where is love? Meaning by that, where is the sound of the sea and the red of the rose; where is music, imagery, and a voice speaking from the heart?

That this is all great nonsense I am well aware. But what else can you expect in a letter? The time has come to open *Scrutinies* and begin to read—no, the time has come to rake out the cinders and go to bed.

VIRGINIA WOOLF.

MILTON AND PRYNNE

SOME NEW LIGHT ON THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

ON June 30th, 1650, William Prynne, Presbyterian Member of Parliament and irrepressible pamphleteer, was arrested at his house in Swainswick, near Bath, and clapped without trial into Dunster Castle.

To the author of *Histrio-Mastrix* there was nothing unfamiliar in the aspect of stone walls and iron bars. He had been a prisoner in the Fleet and in the Tower, in the castle of Mount Orgueil and in that Westminster tavern, picturesquely called "Hell," which was used as a temporary place of detention for the victims of Pride's Purge. Nor can the arrival of the Commonwealth emissaries have caused him any very profound surprise. During his year-long retirement in Somerset he had issued no fewer than three pamphlets, any one of which would have been sufficient to arouse the wrath of the triumphant Army faction; and he had indulged in other and more perilous activities which he can hardly have hoped to keep for ever from the knowledge of the vigilant Council of State in Whitehall.

It had long been supposed that it was these pamphlets which gave the Council a pretext for Prynne's apprehension. Not until the publication in *Notes and Queries* (Eighth Series, Volume VIII.) of a letter from him to Charles II. were the ardour and audacity of his crypto-royalism revealed; and the part played by Milton in the episode of his arrest seems to have remained unknown and unsuspected until now.

In June, 1650, Milton had held for more than a year the post of Secretary for Foreign Languages to the Council of State. He was then installed in temporary quarters within the precincts of the palace, and the Council had thoughtfully instructed "the Trustees and Contractors for the sale of the late King's goods" to provide him with "sufficient hangings to furnish his lodgings in Whitehall." Since taking up his duties he had published his *Observations* on the Peace of Kilkenny and *Eikonoklastes*, and he was in the thick of his acrimonious "flytyng" with Salmasius. His clash with Prynne over the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* had occurred six years earlier, and four years had passed since in the original draft of his sonnet *On the Forcers of Conscience* he had made a rather brutal allusion to the mutilation which his Presbyterian critic had suffered during the Laudian terror. During that time his views had become—if possible—harder and narrower than before, and nothing had happened to soften his old contempt for "that apostate scarecrow," Prynne.

The picturesque illusion, perpetuated by Ford Madox Brown, that Milton did much of his secretarial work in close and friendly intercourse with Cromwell has been exploded; yet a general impression remains that his duties were carried out either in the offices of the Council or in his own quarters, and that they were duties not inappropriate to his character as a patriot, a poet, and a scholar. Even when he had to examine papers found on suspected persons, or—as in one mysterious instance—search the trunks of a nameless captive conducted to London by Cornet Joyce, the wording of the records makes it clear that the objects of his investigations were brought to him at Whitehall. We shall see, however, that Mr. Milton was, on occasion, made to perform functions less dignified and more incongruous than these.

Another prevailing impression is to the effect that Milton was first and foremost the servant of the Committee appointed to deal with Foreign Affairs. In that oddly assorted group of men there may have been one or two who were capable of appreciating his qualities as a poet and a man of letters. They included comparatively moderate Puritans such as Philip Sidney, Lord Lisle, brother of the more famous Algernon, Bulstrode Whitelocke and Lord Denbigh, unevenly yoked together with ravening regicides such as Harry Marten and another Lord Lisle, husband of the more famous Alice. This Committee certainly set Milton to answer Salmasius and to counter Dr. Gauden's all-too-effective royalist propaganda, and gave him diplomatic dispatches to turn into his correct though somewhat involved Renaissance Latin; but about his divagations into profane poetry they probably knew little and cared less. Meanwhile he had other masters to obey and other duties to perform, and a great part of his work was done at the behest of the permanent President of the Council, John Bradshaw, to whom Masson suggests, without giving any very cogent reasons, that he may have owed his appointment as Secretary.

Austere Republican though the poet was he can hardly have had much in common with that hectoring numskull. One of the main difficulties confronting Cromwell and Fairfax after Pride's Purge had been the reluctance of the leading Puritan lawyers to participate in proceedings against the King which they well knew to be irregular and unconstitutional. Bradshaw, like Barkis, "was willin'," and his reward was the President's chair at the Council table and the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster. Little love

was lost between him and the Lord General, for Bradshaw's Republicanism was dyed in grain, and Cromwell, as we know, had ideas of his own upon the nice subject of kingship.

Few things are more curious in the history of this purturbed period than the intolerance of people who had themselves been made to smart by the intolerance of others. Prynne fiercely denied to his non-Presbyterian fellow-Christians that measure of spiritual liberty which had been denied to the Presbyterians by Laud; Bunyan returned to gaol rather than acquiesce in the relaxation of the laws against Roman Catholics; the Seven Bishops went cheerfully to the Tower rather than associate themselves with an act of elementary justice towards Catholics and Dissenters alike. Milton, in his *Colasterion*, rebuked Prynne for this stiff spirit; but Prynne would have regarded tolerance as a Laodicean quality, if nothing worse, and he never ceased to pour forth excited and pedantic leaflets, their margins, as Milton put it, "overlaid with crude and huddled quotations," abusing everyone whose opinions did not chime with his own.

Yet, like most of the Presbyterians, Prynne would have preferred to retain the form if not the substance of the monarchy. It was mitres, rochets and lawn sleeves, lovelocks, masks and lutes that infuriated him, not sceptres, thrones and crowns. And so little did he dissemble his views that it is hardly surprising that they attracted the unfavourable attention of Bradshaw and the Council of State. On June 25th, 1650, the Council issued two warrants, one for the search of Prynne's chambers in Lincoln's Inn and the other for his arrest. In the Calendar of Domestic State papers the name of Edward Dendy, Serjeant at Arms, is tentatively inserted in square brackets as that of the person to whom these warrants were issued, and the second certainly lay in his province, though it would be necessary for him to fare as far afield as Somerset to put it into execution. But in the originals in the Public Record Office there is in each instance a complete blank after the "To" at the bottom left-hand corner, and an unpublished document in the possession of the present writer's family proves that the search warrant was issued to no less a person than John Milton.

The warrant for Prynne's arrest requires the unnamed recipient

> Upon sight hereof to make your repaire to any place where you shall understand the person of William Prynne Esqr. shall bee, and him, the said Mr. Prynne, you shall apprehend and shall secure him in Dunster Castle for his seditious writeings and practices against the Commonwealth.

His house is also to be searched for "all writeings, letters, papers or records that are ag^t this Commonwealth or any way belonging to it." The Council seem to have felt some uncertainty as to Prynne's actual whereabouts, though the mention of Dunster Castle shows that they believed him to be—as indeed he was—far away in the West. More interesting is the hint that Prynne had in his possession papers *belonging* to the Commonwealth. How had he got hold of these? What use was he making, or likely to make, of them? Further light, though less than one might wish, is thrown upon the question by the wording of the warrant for the search of his chambers in Lincoln's Inn. This document has reposed for upwards of two centuries in the archives of an ancient Jacobite family, and has never before been published. Written on the official paper of the Council, in the same ornate, clerkly hand in which all the records for the year 1650 are kept, it runs as follows:

> These are to will and require you forthwith to make your repaire to the studdy and chamber of William Prynne Esquire in Lincolns Inne or elsewhere, which you are dilligently to search for all writeings, Letters, or other papers or Records belonging to the Commonwealth. And alsoe for all writeings, Letters or papers by him written, or in his custody, of dangerous nature against the Commonwealth, all which you are to seize and seale up, and bring or cause to be safely brought to this Counsell that thereupon further Order may be given concerning them. Of which you are not to fayle, and for which this shall be yor sufficient Warrant. Given at the Counsell of State at Whitehall this 25th day of June, 1650.
>
> Signed in ye Name and by Order of the Counsell of State appointed by Authority of Parlam^t.
>
> Jo: BRADSHAWE Prsid^t.
>
> To John Milton Esq^r.,
> Secr^y. to the Counsell for forreigne languages.

In the minutes of the Council the wording of this warrant is practically identical, but the peremptory sentence beginning "of which you are not to fayle" is omitted, and the date is given in Latin.

And here, most provokingly, the curtain falls. Did Milton make his "repaire" forthwith to Lincoln's Inn, and did he return while the Council was still in session, in time for them to issue the warrant for Prynne's arrest before they rose? Did he invade Prynne's "studdy and chamber," and peer with his one serviceable eye into cobwebby corners of cupboards, and rummage in shelves and drawers, and rake forth papers "of dangerous nature to the Commonwealth"? I can find no trace of any report made to the Council by their Secretary. It is certain that Prynne's arrest took place five days later, and that he was kept in captivity without trial for close upon three years. In 1658 he was released, despite his characteristic refusal to give security to the sum of £1,000 that he would thenceforward do nothing against the Commonwealth.

In the event the indomitable fellow returned to Lincoln's Inn. It was thence that he wrote on May 2nd, 1660, the letter to Charles II. printed in *Notes and Queries* and very briefly mentioned in the D.N.B., and it was there that he died in 1669. His services to the Stuarts during their exile cannot have been negligible, for Charles II., a lazy man, had actually taken the trouble to send him both a message and a letter of thanks while yet the Shadow Court was sojourning "in the Lowlands low." Prynne, though he modestly describes himself as "a weake despicable worme," is obviously charmed by the royal condescension, and takes the opportunity of reminding the King of the efforts he has made on his behalf, "my weake (though loyall and sincere) endeavours," he calls them, "to reduce yo^r seduced subjects to their naturall allegiance, and yo^r overlong exterminated Ma^ty to yo^r hereditary throne and kingdomes."

More interesting still, Prynne shows at how early a date and at how perilous a moment he had begun to exert himself on Charles's behalf. "I used my best endeavours," he says, "the very next day after y^r royall Father's bloudy butchery by publishing and dispersing some hundreds of the inclosed Proclamations (when none durst owne ye right) throughout yo^r kingdom."

When all is said and done, the Council of State would appear to have dealt leniently enough with this recalcitrant and indefatigable adversary! It is pleasant to remember that, with a fine ironic touch, his "overlong exterminated Ma^ty" rewarded Prynne by making him Keeper of the Records at the Tower. Then, like good dog Tray in the immortal rhyme, it may be said of Prynne that he was

> happy now,
> He had no time to say Bow-wow,

or, as Milton had put it, to "set out barking monitories and mementoes." True, he continued to write almost incessantly, but the matter is now chiefly legal or antiquarian. Literally and figuratively, he had hung up his old basket-hilted sword.

Like that sword, with which he girt himself when at the head of the excluded Members he returned to Westminster Hall, and like the great quilted cap which he wore when sitting at his desk, Prynne belonged rather to the age of James I. than to the age of Charles II. In the chapel of Lincoln's Inn, where he lies buried, there ought to be a seated effigy of him, similar to the effigy of Stowe in St. Andrew Undershaft, in whose carven hand the Master of the Rolls should place a fresh quill pen on every anniversary of his death.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

MAKING A FIRE

SCATTER a few cold cinders into the grate;
On these lay paper puffed into airy balloon,
Then kindling wood, parched by the suns of Summer,
drowsy and sweet;
Then coal. A flare: a flame: and a fire will be burning
soon—

Antler-tongued and impetuous. But unless you pay heed,
It will fall, fade, and grow heatless and ash away out.
So is it with anger in heart and in brain: the insensate seed
Of fiery enkindling leaps into horror and rout;

But remaining untended, it dies, and the soul within
Is refreshed by the dews of sweet amity, compassion's
cool rain.
Not so with the flames Hell has kindled for unassoiled sin,
As soon as God's mercy would quench them, Love, weeping,
lights them again.

WALTER DE LA MARE.

THE KISS

I AM for the woods against the world,
But are the woods for me?
I have sought them sadly, fearing
My fate's mutability,
Or that which action and process make
Of former sympathy.

Strange that those should arrive strangers
Who were once entirely at home.
Colonnade, sunny wall and warren,
Islet, osier, foam,
Buds and leaves and selves seemed
Safe to the day of doom.

By-roads following, and this way wondering,
I spy men abroad
In orchards, knarred and woody men
Whose touch is bough and bud;
Co-arboreal sons of landscape.
Then in the windstript wood

Is the cracking of stems; and under the thorn
With a kobold's closeness lurks
The wanderer with his knife and rods,
That like a bald rook works;
His woman-rook about the thicket
Prowls at the hazel-forks.

Sheep lying out by the swollen river
Let the flood roll down
Without so much as a glance; they know it;
The hurling seas of brown
Cannot persuade the ferrying moorhen
Her one willow will drown.

This way wondering, I renew
Some sense of common right;
And through my armour of imposition
Win the spring's keen light,
Till for the woods against the world
I kiss the aconite.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

MR. LONSDALE'S new "sparkling" comedy *The Devil to Pay* at the Tivoli, and *The City of Song* at the New Gallery, through which may be heard warbling the silver note of Mr. Miles Malleson, are two manifestations of what is called in some circles the "British genius." True, the British genius is in both somewhat diluted. At the Tivoli we have an English dramatist, English dialogue and English actors, with a very efficient American in control of the camera. In *The City of Song* the direction is English, but the company has looked abroad for some of its best actors, including an eleven-year-old Italian, who gives an amazing performance as a Neapolitan street arab.

The City of Song has been honourably conceived as a film. *The Devil to Pay*, though "specially written for the films," is not a film play at all, but just another of Mr. Lonsdale's comedies, boiled down to one hour and tricked out with some shots of Derby Day. Evidently Mr. Lonsdale has never considered for a moment what a film play ought to be. The actors, however, are excellent. Mr. Ronald Colman, our chief triumph of recent years in the export line, was really gay and amusing as an attractive ne'er-do-well, of the kind that can be relied upon to turn up from Kenya; while Mr. George Kerr, who must have played the same part a thousand times, triumphed with his aristocratic tricks. Mr. Lonsdale's utterly frivolous dialogue compares, of course, very favourably with the abject chatter of the ordinary "talkie" and the camera man provided the essential American "pep." Further, as the play was "specially written" the dialogue was not already staled by a year's use in the theatre. The result is quite a tolerable evening, if you are in a good temper and in good company. Yet, I confess I preferred the twenty delirious minutes of Mack Sennett's skit on Hollywood called *The Hollywood Theme Song*. But then, Mr. Sennett is a genius. Still, *The Devil to Pay* bricks were really very good quality, considering that only the wrong sort of straw had been provided by the manufacturers.

In *The City of Song* the opposite process was at work. The straw, if not of the very finest quality, was sufficient, but somehow the bricks did not quite come up to standard. *The City of Song* is a film play pure and simple, dealing with an English lady, who loses her head rather badly in the sun

YOUR FORTUNE! WHICH METHOD?

SAVE IT
OR

CREATE IT—THEN—SAVE IT.

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of Southern Italy. It is adequate and fairly truthful. A false sentimental ending has been avoided. As long as the scene stuck to Naples or Capri we had always something pretty to look at. The unsophisticated tenor, the victim of the heroine's emotional dissatisfaction, as he sang his heart away amid the sun-baked ruins of Pompeii, almost brought off the Merimée effect desired. It was all very creditable, very worthy, and yet at the end one had seen Naples and yawned. We all covered the ground too slowly. Travellers must often have noticed what an infernal time it takes Herr Baedeker to progress from one piazza to another. His dilatory methods are designed for the weak legs of elderly ladies. *The City of Song* proceeded with the same dowager tread. The excitement was always being slightly toned down, the emotions slightly blunted. You cannot make a complete fool of yourself to the Dead March in Saul. This is such a familiar criticism of British films that one is sick of making it. But it happens to be the truth, and this is not surprising; for this slowness was picked up in the English theatre, where the progress has always been that of a State funeral. Still, why cannot British directors learn a trick or two from Harold Lloyd and William Powell? There is heaps of taste displayed in *The City of Song*, some very good photography, and a genial spirit. But one thing is wanted, something to season the whole dish, a little American " stick." Why, on the not exploded assumption that exports pay for imports, cannot we not get a little " pep " in exchange for Mr. Ronald Colman?

There is a good deal of slow and sometimes sticky sentiment and humour about *Etienne* at the St. James' Theatre; but it has several neat and diverting embellishments which one remembers, as well as qualities of suggestion and impartiality which English comedy writers would do well to study. The story is complicated, and it has many well-worn conventions, including a doting mother, a naughty and grandiloquent father, and a family meeting with a funny aunt. It is as a study of Etienne, the son of the house, and a trying young man, that the play shows signs of originality. It concerns his career from the time when he lets off fireworks in his bedroom at midnight and boils all the thermometers in the house till the period when he says " to hell with all women ! " But he is not so trying as he might be, nor indeed as he promises to be, when he announces that his ambition is not to be a veterinary surgeon, but a writer, for instead of going the way of most young stage literary geniuses he writes advertisements for cherry brandy and manages the household by teaching his father how to keep his job of making snappy catalogue puffs for the spring sales.

The acting is suited to the business of sticking obvious labels on all the characters so that they won't get lost. Mr. Emlyn Williams, as Etienne, with his pockets full of dirty handkerchiefs and doorknobs, got a great deal of fun out of the part, and by attacking the sloppy passages naturally avoided all mawkishness. It would have been easy for him and Miss Mary Clare, as the mother, to embarrass any audience, but, without being too sweet and simple, they never did. Mr. David Horne, as the father, was excellent, too, and he shrugged his shoulders to perfection whenever he had to climb down a peg, in his office, in his home, or in love. Miss Myno Burnet looked convincingly beautiful and acted with self-possession in a part where both these qualities were indispensable.

A new work by Dame Ethel Smyth for soprano, bass, chorus and orchestra, which has just recently been introduced to the public in Edinburgh, received its first London performance at the Queen's Hall by the Bach Choir and the London Symphony Orchestra, under Adrian Boult, last Tuesday. It is a setting of words from *The Prison: a Dialogue*, by H. B. Brewster, originally published in 1891, and now reprinted with a memoir of the author by Ethel Smyth herself. We are told that " The Prison " stands for Self, and that the book " records the struggle of one called ' The Prisoner ' to escape from his bonds," and that the motto printed on the title page of the score, and quoted by Andrew Lang as the last words of Plotinus (" I am striving to release that which is divine within us and to merge it in the universally divine ") " exactly sums up its essence."

Intentions are not in themselves evil, but we know the route they pave. Dame Ethel Smyth's intentions are, no doubt, unimpeachable. So, perhaps, were the late Mr. Brewster's; but let us quote a typical specimen of his performance. It is " The Prisoner " speaking:

> I disband myself
> And travel on for ever in your scattered paths;
> Whereso'er you are there then shall I be,
> I survive in you ! I set my ineffaceable stamp
> On the womb of time !

Whatever else it is this is not literature. It is jargon, and a kind of jargon that used only to impose upon Americans, being a convenient mixture of lofty aspiration and vague expression, convenient because it commits one to nothing at all.

Dame Smyth has shown an equal felicity in her setting which is a monument of banality, and would hardly have achieved, and certainly not have survived, a single public performance had its composer been a man and not a woman, whom our critics still feel it is unchivalrous to criticise adversely. One cannot say that this music means anything at all. It is completely without inspiration, and lacks musical instinct to such a degree that it is a mere patchwork of bird twitterings and bugle calls. The orchestra will often repeat boldly the ending of a vocal phrase. Suddenly, for no reason whatever, the setting of solemn (if not " serious ") words will break into waltz time with ludicrous effect. When a storm is " hushed to the pipe of a thrush " sure enough we hear the pipe of a piccolo. It is all cheap, unreal, unrealised emotion and description. Such music cannot be seriously discussed at all.

Things to see and hear in the coming week :—

Saturday, February 28th.—
Léner Quartet, Queen's Hall, 8.

Sunday, March 1st.—
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Furtwängler, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Albert Hall, 8.
" Lui," by Alfred Savior, at the Arts Theatre.

Monday, March 2nd.—
" The Circle," by Somerset Maugham, at the Vaudeville.

Tuesday, March 3rd.—
Professor Winifred Cullis on " Physiology," Morley College, 8.
Jean Sterling Mackinlay's Recital at the Old Vic, 8.
" Hamlet," at the Haymarket.
Horse Show: Hunters and Thoroughbreds, Royal Agricultural Hall.

Wednesday, March 4th.—
Miss Naomi Jacob on " The Actress: Lesser Lights of the Stage," Caxton Hall, 8.
Mr. A. M. Wijk on " August Strindberg," University College, 5.30.
" Fanny's First Play," by Bernard Shaw, at the Court.
" O.H.M.S.," by Reginald Berkeley, at the Arts Theatre.

Thursday, March 5th.—
Dr. Camillo Pellizzi on " Pisa " (in Italian), University College, 5.30.

Friday, March 6th.—
Mr. George Gordon on " The Literary Relations, past and present, of England and the United States," University College, 5.30.
Sir Herbert Samuel on " British Mandates," the B.B.C., 7.25.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

IT must be rather disconcerting for Miss Stella Benson. For some years she has written stories of an exquisite, restrained beauty, stories in which there is an element of spiritual fun that one may seek in vain through other English books (it can be found in James Stephens), stories in which the least touch makes vibrate strings that go to the heart of all that matters to those of us who refuse to be cheated or comforted by a world of appearances. She has had her audience—I dare not say fit, for there are few enough whose imaginative stature is sufficient for a proper appreciation of Miss Benson—but she has had that band of devotees who wait for new books as eagerly as they wait for a new book of Mr. de la Mare's or Mrs. Virginia Woolf's. She was a best seller; that is, the people who really loved literature bought her books—as to the extent of her sales I know nothing, but one does not expect books like *The Poor Man* and *Living Alone* to rival the sales of *The Mauve Bonnet*.

* * *

So it must be disconcerting for Miss Stella Benson to find her new book greeted with avuncular patronage and boisterous heartiness by the gentleman who believed Mr. Cabell's *Jurgen* was a great book. No one takes Mr. Walpole seriously as a critic—at least on this side of the Atlantic—and it is unfortunate that the Book Society did not leave the task of praising Miss Benson to a more sensitive member of its committee—Mrs. Lynd, for instance, has a right to praise Miss Benson. Still, I hope her sales will be helped by Mr. Walpole's eulogy, though he does write criticisms as if he was one of those professional pep-providers engaged in American universities to encourage the right spirit in the football team. Possibly even criticism of that kind may arouse the attention of some understanding reader, and so add to Miss Benson's admirers a few who might not otherwise have read her new novel. *Tobit Transplanted* (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.) is a very good book. It is not so good as *The Poor Man*, and its personages live in closer contact with life's realities than the people in *Living Alone* and *Pipers and a Dancer;* for each of these reasons it may be more popular than any of the author's previous books, and it will delight her admirers by its deftness of workmanship, its deep imaginative irony and its delicate, firm handling of human weaknesses and human sorrow. It is useless to look for parallels to Miss Benson; but not seldom, in reading *Tobit Transplanted*, I caught an echo of an old artist, and suddenly I realised that were Heinrich Heine alive, and writing modern fiction, he would write something not unlike *Tobit Transplanted*.

* * *

Following a more formidable but no truer artist, Miss Benson has placed her story of Russian refugees in Manchuria into the framework of an ancient tale; but the parallels between her story and the Biblical *Tobit* are much easier to work out than those between the Homeric *Odyssey* and Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses*. *Tobit Transplanted* could be enjoyed by a reader who had never read a word of this tale of the exile in Nineveh; but I am glad Miss Benson had the happy thought of reprinting that delightful story at the end of her own, so that those who care for literary comparisons can discover how ingeniously she has followed the pattern of the old legend. The reprint, too, reminds one in the simplest way possible of that recurrence in human history which is the source at once of mortal hope and mortal despair, reminds one of our danger in arrogating to ourselves any special mental or moral superiority over those who lived in ages that seem dark because we so often turn our backs on their light, and are blinded by our own conceited illuminations. For instance, Sara in *Tobit* seems an unnatural creature to us: what is this girl who married seven men, all of whom died on their wedding-nights, this girl loved by "a wicked spirit, which hurteth nobody but those which come unto her"? How naturally and with what beautiful skill Miss Benson translates that hint given so strangely by the older story-teller in her picture of Tanya, daughter of Pavel Ostapenko, Tanya who "comes at the beginning of something new," and so terrifies her lover "who comes at the end of something old"; Tanya who aches for loneliness and the integrity of loneliness, because she has never found a companionship that did not, even if it only touched the fringes of her shawl, threaten her integrity. A quotation will show the subtlety and the piercing kindness of Miss Benson's analysis. Tanya's seventh lover has killed himself, and her father has stormed at her as "something that is a woman and is not." Tanya

> stood rigidly, looking towards the window. To look out of her window was, with her, almost always a prayer or an act of praise to some unknown God. The window was like the face of God or of a lover to her; she studied every line and shade, as an adoring lover studies a face, or a believer a miraculous manifestation. She marvelled so over living things, simply because they lived—moved—created—grew—begot—conceived. . . . Yet she was accused of talking—of treachery to that strange quiet empire, the law of which is the beating of the heart. She, who valued things for their independence of herself, for their incomprehensibility, for their magical remoteness—she who so slightly intruded even upon her own life—was reproached for intruding on the lives of others. All the world outside her window was jewelled with impeccable life, for her—and she, trusted in the treasure-house, was a convicted robber.

* * *

All Miss Benson's books have, in a way, been concerned with this problem of contact. Is it ever possible, an intimacy, a real interchange between mind and human mind? Is it helped or hindered by physical contact? Is all our effort at what we call "getting to know someone" a vain pretence, and our boasted knowledge only the reflection of an egotistic vanity? Is the world of our friends and acquaintances, our lovers and our detesters, but one huge mirror the glass of which, in our desire to flee from the self-conscious recesses of our own souls, we shatter into bits, only to find that each fragment, apparently so separate, so different, reflects with a desperate iteration the image from which we would flee? Those thus perplexed are wont to think happier the people for whom the visible world most definitely exists—Tanya's parents are of that company, and so are Seryozha's parents, though his father, old Serge, has the beginnings of a mortal self-consciousness. Then we have Mr. Wilfred Chew, member of the Middle Temple, London, E.C. 4, well found in the principles of the Christian faith, after the religion of the Methodists. This rule fortunately includes abstinence from wine among its precepts; fortunately, I say, not in approval, but because it enables Mr. Chew to be more drunken in a more entertaining way than I have met for a long time. One reason, I suppose, why Miss Benson chose *Tobit* as the prototype is that *Tobit* has a dog. There are no dogs in fiction as good as Miss Benson's dogs, and she has given her Seryozha a dog which will not yield pride of place to the best efforts of Italian painters. This dog thinks as a dog should, not as a man does; how just are the pages in which, bereaved of his master, the dog finds Wilfred Chew and decides that "this morning the man could certainly be promoted to the rank of an encouraging smell." *Tobit Transplanted* is a rich book; it is fuller of incident, more generous in texture than Miss Benson's earlier novels; indeed it combines the delicacy and poignancy of her fiction with the robuster humour that she has generally kept for her books of travel. It is truly a book of travel, and there is no living writer who can conduct one on a journey, imaginative or geographical, with the grace or the skill of Miss Stella Benson.

RICHARD SUNNE.

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I like skyscrapers. New York looks a fairy city of romance as one approaches it up the broad river, and admiration for its outline of lofty buildings is natural and hackneyed. In the interior one enjoys contemplating the highest perpendicular lines in the world and perceiving what tricks the eye plays with perspective, so that the lines appear to slope this way and that, but never to stand straight. And I like the conspicuous citizens, so delightfully housed, so anxious to maintain a reputation for hustle and business, so solicitous to please. But alluring as the buildings and prosperous existence in American cities are, I turn with a sense of relief to Mount Vernon and to the celebrated man who owned it once. For with them I am more at home.

The house at Mount Vernon, standing on a high bluff above the Potomac, was built at the best period of the eighteenth century. It remains furnished as Washington left it, with the furniture of the best period in English domestic art; and its owner was always very particular about ordering from London the very best and most fashionable furniture and costumes of the time. As to the man himself, he was near enough by English descent to possess the peculiar characteristics of our country's breed, and he remained a British subject for the greater part of his life. Indeed, he was something over forty when the revolution began, and up to that time he would have felt little distinction between Englishman and American. Till the end he possessed many of the finer qualities of our race—the love of country life, the contempt for display, the incapacity for rhetoric, and the resolution that refuses to acknowledge defeat.

I am glad to find that Mr. Shelby Little reveals other national qualities, proving that Washington was by no means the rather chilly, impeccable and saintlike hero that most other writers and speakers have called upon us to worship. He had a farmer's keen eye for profit and economy; he watched his own interests, and kept his accounts with careful exactness; for marriage he went where money was; he was subject to rages difficult to control; he was ruthless in executing justice; though a great slave-owner, he was kindly to his slaves; and though by tradition he "could not tell a lie," the extension of his large property into territory belonging by treaty to the Indians beyond the Alleghenies entailed a practice that in lesser men might be called sharp.

The present book is evidently the result of extraordinary diligence and research. It is almost a diary of the hero's private and public life. Earlier biographies, as the author truly says, were written, not of Washington, but of a great American legend, and legends are not made up of light and shade. Here we are given the picture in light and shade, and so may form a real conception of the man. Some faults, not in the writing so much as in the form, of the large volume are obvious. There is no table of contents to guide the reader; the headings of the pages supply no guide, and when the book is called *George Washington* we do not need to be told the title and nothing but the title on the top of 459 pages; worse than all, there is no map, though campaigns against the Indians, French and British are described in succession, and some of the places mentioned are not to be found on modern maps. Yet, in spite of these defects, which might have been so easily remedied, I believe the book to contain a just and praiseworthy account of a complicated character living in complicated and most difficult times.

Many points in the book are new, at all events to one reader. One might doubtless have expected that a chief among Washington's troubles would be supply of food and clothes for his army while the English fleet commanded the sea, but a difficulty quite as serious was the deplorable character of his men. Wolfe, the hero of Quebec, had called the American soldiers "the dirtiest, most contemptible, cowardly dogs that you can conceive." And Washington found his so-called soldiers always liable to panic and always inclined to drift away, carrying their arms and equipment. On one occasion, while he was holding the Harlem Heights above New York, he found them all scurrying off instead of guarding the landings from the English. He wrote of their "disgraceful and dastardly conduct," and was only just saved from fighting the battle single-handed. There was no discipline among his troops till he procured a Prussian officer to teach them what discipline really means. Yet we cannot wonder at the frequent desertions in mass or by driblets from one State or another. The famine and destitution were appalling. In the distressful time after the defeat at Brandywine river, while his wretched army was lingering powerless at Valley Forge, the General wrote that all necessaries, including soap, were lacking: "Indeed, we have little occasion for soap; few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all." The hospitals and farms were full of men without shoes, and three thousand lay in camp unfit for duty because they were barefoot and otherwise naked. Over two thousand crawled into Philadelphia hungry, barefoot, and with scarcely more clothing than a ragged blanket strapped about their waists. These man were not regulars but volunteers or casual levies, and in hopes of maintaining discipline Washington wrote to Congress urging that the number of lashes carried by any sentence should be left to the discretion of the court or limited to a larger number. "In this case I would recommend five hundred." It was a cruel field.

How far Washington can be called a great general it is hard to decide. He often showed a fatal hesitation and more than Fabian slowness of movement. He formed an unhappy habit of summoning councils of war—a habit usually confined to inferior generals. But he was harassed as most generals have been by silly criticism from the civilian authorities, by jealousies among his officers, and by acts of supreme treachery such as Arnold's. And yet at last, partly by good luck and partly by skilled strategy, he did succeed in compelling Cornwallis to surrender with some 7,000 men at Yorktown, and so bringing the war to an end. Naturally the Congress appointed him first President of the Republic.

It was the climax of a fine and persistent career. But it was in vain that he retired to "cultivate his cabbages" at Mount Vernon. Endless cares and anxieties still fell heavy upon him. The country lay prostrate in chaos. The Constitution had to be framed. Presently the whole new nation was rent into two sharply hostile parties by the French Revolution. The cry of "La Fayette!" became the slogan of the popular supporters of the Parisian extremists, forgetting that La Fayette was lying under sentence of death by command of the extremists themselves. Washington at first had regarded La Fayette with contemptuous distrust, but had come to know the value of his friendship and assistance. Being himself by nature on the side of the moderates, he was openly assaulted by the friends of the revolution as a "crocodile," a "hyaena," a "deceiver," a "double dealer," and a "traitor," while even the streets of Quaker Philadelphia were packed with a populace shouting the "*Ça Ira!*"

So Time brings its revenges. At the beginning of the War of Independence old Johnson said: "They are a race of convicts, sir! and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging." There is an old epigram:

> Treason never prospers! What's the reason?
> That when it prospers none dare call it treason.

At one corner of Trafalgar Square, amid heroes of the British race, stands a rather diminutive statue in bronze. It represents the arch-rebel George Washington. For we are a forgiving people, and here, too, Time has brought its revenges.

H. W. NEVINSON.

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small; the historian usually tends to regard events through the eye of a contemporary, and the scale against which he measures them is, therefore, that of one man's lifetime or at most a century. As a result the Muse Clio has always been rather short-sighted. The importance of Peter the Great or Catherine the Great will appear very different according as you look at them through the eyes of their contemporaries or through the eye of God, and the place of the French Revolution in the history of Europe will vary according to whether you are thinking of one hundred years or one thousand years of European history.

A book which takes the long and cultural view of Russia is particularly welcome and the editor could hardly have chosen a better person to write it than Prince Mirsky. There are few books in English which help one to relate Russian history to Russian culture. In fact, few Englishmen know much about the history of Russia and what they do know is mainly confined to Peter and Catherine and the author of the Holy Alliance. Then, Russian culture to most people is an insoluble mystery, a gigantic muddle of great novels, the Russian Ballet and barbarism, which the western European hopelessly tries to dismiss by remarking that the Russian has always been three quarters an Asiatic. We opened Prince Mirsky's large volume, therefore, with large expectations. When we closed it with a feeling of some mental repletion, our hopes had been partially fulfilled and partially disappointed. It is a work of considerable learning and as a survey of Russian history contains a mass of information not easily, if at all, accessible to the English reader. This is particularly true of the earlier history of Russia, and for that portion alone the book would be valuable. Prince Mirsky throws his net wide, as is right in a history which aims at giving the picture of a cultural background, and anthropology, social institutions, architecture, music, painting, literature, as well as kings and queens and "drums and trumpets," find a place in his story.

Undoubtedly, the necessary material lies within these pages for an understanding of Russian culture. The fault may lie with the author or with us or with Russian culture—or more probably with all three—but when we had finished the book, though we had acquired much knowledge of the Russians and their history, we did not feel that we had gained much understanding of their souls or their civilisation. For this, Prince Mirsky must take a little of the blame. The most serious defect of his book he himself has pointed out in his preface, namely "the absence of a single point of view." Indeed, while he was writing the book, his whole conception of history appears to have undergone an almost fundamental change. To entrust oneself to a rudderless historian is always a hazardous enterprise; it is peculiarly disastrous if one is expecting to be piloted towards an understanding of such an elusive thing as a national or racial civilisation. One feels that the author of this book has often lost sight of its object, and he slips into a narrative of mere facts, no doubt interesting in themselves and unknown to most Englishmen, but which the reader has no means of relating to one another or to Russian culture. Every now and then he makes an illuminating generalisation, as, for instance, that the Russian in his early history was extremely individualistic and the anti-individualistic features characteristic of modern Russian society are the result of later developments, or that Russian folk-music and folk-dances are Asiatic. But he hardly ever exercises that faculty for bold and stimulating generalisation which he shows in his books on Russian literature and which is of such value there for an English reader, even though he may suspect that occasionally Prince Mirsky's literary judgments are wrong.

A foreigner contemplating the Russians, their history and their civilisation, is immediately impressed by the violence of the contrasts. Things happen catastrophically in the history, practically never by gradual development. The Bolshevik revolution of the 20th century, for instance, is not more catastrophic than were the reforms of Peter in the 18th, and it is characteristic that while Peter moved the capital from Moscow to Petersburg, Lenin moved it back again from Petersburg to Moscow. It is inconceivable that we should have moved the capital of Britain twice in a little over 200 years between London and Manchester, or that the French should have done the same with Paris and Lyons. Prince Mirsky points out the contrast in ancient Muscovite history between the "stability of its political philosophy and the frequent instability of its social fabric"; between 1564 and 1670 there were four revolutionary movements. And the same deep-seated instability, of which violent contrasts are but a symptom, can be traced in all things Russian. Consider the fact that Serge Aksakov was a contemporary of Bakunin and Herzen; think of the political and social system in which the Oblomovism of Goncharov or of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* was embedded; remember that Turgenev, Tolstoy, and Dostoevsky were all writing at the same time. Even in the minds of the individual Russians, in a Dostoevsky and a Tolstoy, one seems to see this violent instability and discord reappearing. I do not think it would be possible to find anything like this in the history and culture of any other European nation. No doubt the causes of its existence are to be found in the facts given in Prince Mirsky's book, but the method adopted by him does not help the reader to piece together those facts that are relevant. For this kind of understanding, Professor Masaryk's *The Spirit of Russia* though in many ways open to criticism, is more helpful.

LEONARD WOOLF.

THE COMPLETE EPICUREAN

The Letters of St. Evremond. Edited by JOHN HAYWARD. Routledge. 21s.

Some ten years ago Mr. Hayward, the editor and annotator of this book, was invited to climb a ladder in Westminster Abbey to examine the inscription on Saint Evremond's monument. That was the beginning of his interest in this strange Frenchman, who spent most of the last forty-two years of his long life in England, and died in 1703. He may have felt that Saint Evremond was a writer peculiarly likely to appeal to post-war literary tastes—by which I do not mean the tastes of to-day, but those which were distinctively thought of as neo-Georgian from five to ten years ago. He had a pretty wit, a light vein of irony, a talent for phrase-making, and a flippant detestation of high seriousness in regard to all but the not too serious matters of life. He was a professed epicurean, and probably no man ever clung more consistently to the principles of the pleasure-loving philosopher than he, alike in practice and precept.

He respected food and wine, and for him the prandial pleasures were tempered with artistic reserve. He was a connoisseur in the loves of women, and had a nice and discriminating taste in the less violent passions of the heart. He had had some early training in philosophy, but did not think it profitable to pursue philosophical studies. He was interested in the psychological effects of religion, and was quizzical about learned divines. He read a good deal when he had time on his hands, but preferred conversation. Hard intellectual work he regarded as a menial occupation, but useful in others, since it provided good mental fare which men of quality could enjoy. He pursued pleasure on principle, avoiding the inconvenience of excess. He was immoderate in nothing except his raillery—and for that one extravagance he paid dearly by half a lifetime of exile.

I do not suggest that Saint Evremond himself would feel in the least at home in neo-Georgian England. For there is no trace of affectation in his fastidious attitude to life. It was natural to him. He was not a rebel against idealism, or Protestant morality, or middle-class earnestness. In his youth he had never known these things, and when he met them in Holland in middle age he was amazed at them as odd and puzzling phenomena. He was a member of the French aristocracy at a time when Richelieu had been depriving that class of all its governing functions, and when, under Mazarin, it had nothing to fall back on but the sporting amusement of easy-going wars, and the sporting amusement of the salons. Ninon de Lenclos is not very respectable as studied in the pages of history; but Ninon de Lenclos was respected as well as loved in seventeenth-century France. Her standard of living was in no wise contrary to the standard which prevailed at the French Court or, for the matter of that, at the Court of Charles II; and Saint Evremond probably did not greatly exaggerate when he said that "Infidelity passes for a genteel merit in agreable Courts"; and he came as near to being genuinely shocked as he could be when he discovered that in Holland infidelity "is reckon'd the foulest of all vices with this honest nation, which is very wise as to the conduct of its Government, but unexperienc'd as to refined pleasures, and a polite way of living."

He belonged to a class whose privilege it was to have nothing whatever to do, and among whom it was a merit to kill time as elegantly as possible. Many diversions had been invented for this purpose—wars of strategy, landscape gardening, social parties, music, the theatre—and for those who were intellectually inclined, literature, philosophy, and even religious disputation. He took the life as seriously as it could be taken. He had studied philosophy with Gassendi. He was well acquainted with Greek and Latin literature. He had accomplishments which brought

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him, as a dilettante, into a sphere where one could appreciate Corneille, be friendly with Boileau, understand Molière, and dislike Racine. He himself wrote essays which were much read, and were pirated by the printers. He wrote his letters, one is inclined to think, with equal care, but with more freedom. One letter, alas! which he wrote to the Marquis de Créqui in 1659, all too freely lashing Cardinal Mazarin for his part in the Treaty with Spain, brought down on him the lasting enmity of the Court. In 1661, at the age of 45, he was compelled to leave the country, and thenceforward he was an exile, separated from his friends, cut off from most of his revenues, and dependent mainly on the charity of Charles II or William III.

But he went on writing his letters, and his friends, including Ninon de Lenclos, were amazingly faithful to him. The latter even repaid half the debt which she owed him, out of friendliness, and refrained from paying the other half, out of love. She kept up a lively correspondence with him till the time when he and she were nearing ninety years of age. "You were born to love all the days of your life," he writes to her, when she was already over eighty-one.

But though the subject of love is so frequently a theme in his letters, he never lets it absorb his attention. He is careful to explain to one lady to whom he writes with modified gallantry that "if I pass from Friendship to Love without difficulty; I am able to return from Love to Friendship, with as little violence." Mannerliness, and the lack of discomfort which comes from it, is for him the first thing—good breeding, gentility, the attributes proper to a man of quality. But these are for him attributes of the mind. Their presence or absence affects his judgment of literature and the arts; and his feeling about them is wholly instinctive, and not in the least snobbish. It often leads him to shrewd and sound judgments. He comes to exactly the same conclusion about Cicero as Mommsen did later. He blames him because he "never divests himself of his Rhetorick"; and his aristocratic taste leads him to a curious but just judgment about Cicero and Cæsar. Having remarked that Cæsar "was able to dispute the prize of Eloquence with Cicero; though he did not affect the reputation of it," he adds: "He writ and spoke infinitely more like a man of quality, than that Orator." Which is true. But who else has praised Cæsar as a "man of quality"?

The flippancy of Saint Evremond, agreeable as it is likely to be to moderns who have acquired flippancy, is in him in no way an affectation. He by nature dislikes gush, and that sort of seriousness which seems to him gushing. He admires the poetry of Corneille, but he is annoyed, even with him, in passages where, "our souls being prepar'd for Raptures," are "not transported," and "are left in a condition more uneasy than languor." Indeed he comes to the general conclusion about poetry as a whole that "it is sometimes the language of gods, sometimes of Buffoons; rarely that of a gentleman."

> Excellent poets are as requisite for our entertainment, as great mathematicians for our use; but it is sufficient for us to be acquainted with their works, and not to engage ourselves in the solitary enthusiasm of the one, or to exhaust our spirits in meditation, like the other.

Saint Evremond will certainly never be accused of devoting himself with a too passionate zeal to the service of mankind. Those who do so, for him, exist for his amusement; and he serves a purpose in existing also for ours. His detached attitude to life leads him by accident to many truths. He is ahead of his time in scorning the artificial style of poetry then in vogue, "which is fill'd with similes of the Morning, Sun, Moon, and Stars." But Comedy, and "what concerns Humanity, its inclinations, tendernesses, and affections, finds something in the inmost recesses of our souls prepar'd to receive it."

He has been compared to Montaigne. But Montaigne was a great man, and there is no touch of greatness in Saint Evremond. Indeed there is little to admire in him except his tenacity in friendship, his wit, his shrewdness, his honesty. But perhaps that is a good deal. He is superbly interesting as a writer who has consciously realised and ingeniously stated the principles of life of a class of privileged and irresponsible human beings who again and again turn up in the social history of the world.

We are in Mr. Hayward's debt for an edition annotated with great care, the text being mainly based upon that of 1728. His own translation of the letters to D'Hervart, now first printed in English, compares very favourably with the work of his eighteenth-century predecessors.

R. A. SCOTT-JAMES.

NEW NOVELS

The Garden. By L. A. G. STRONG. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

Back Street. By FANNIE HURST. Cape. 7s. 6d.

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The Sensitive One. By C. H. B. KITCHIN. Hogarth Press. 6s.

The Royal Woman. By HEINRICH MANN. Translated by ARTHUR J. ASHTON. Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

In *The Garden* Mr. Strong has turned back to the haven of childhood, and sought to reproduce the quality of its enchantment. It is a theme which tempts most novelists at some time or other. It is not enough to remember, one must re-enter; one must take a dose out of Alice's Wonderland bottle and shrink till one's eyes are on a level with the table-edge, and tell of life from that viewpoint.

For Mr. Strong's hero, Dermot, the home of his mother in Ireland where he spends two months of the summer, is a magic place, containing a bluff gardener, a cat, a monkey, a voluble servant, and presided over by a wonderful grandfather, about the appointments of whose meals, even, there was mystery for a child; he having something which required a knife and fork when the others were eating boiled eggs with bone spoons. The exciting childish beauty of the new, the "different," the "not-home," is brought out in the account of tea-time after their arrival:

> The bone spoon was almost flat. It made an egg last beautifully long, for you could not get much on at a time; and, when you came to the white, fearful skill was needed, breathless feats of balancing. It was Dermot's secret ambition to get all the white on his spoon, in a single unbroken roll. This, he saw would be impossible in Ireland; but he did not mind a bit. The bone spoons were enough in themselves to compensate for anything. He sat looking down in pure happiness.

To these surroundings and these people, described with passionately observed detail, Dermot returned regularly in after summers as he was growing up, till at the end of the book he leaves them for the last time to meet the fate in store for many boys whose manhood coincided with the year 1914. This story of the reactions of a child to life's unfolding is told with sympathetic accuracy, his growing pains as well as pleasures. Mr. Strong's powers of description enable the reader to identify much of Dermot's childhood with his own, whether it is the cosy play of firelight on china ornaments or horrific introduction to death of beast or man. One feels the sea-breeze and smells the boats while his Irish fishermen talk. Mr. Strong does not, however, select as he should; he is rather apt to overcrowd his canvas. Detail needs more space—as Dickens gave it in such a novel as *David Copperfield*, where the cake offered to Barkis, or the ale that the waiter saved Copperfield from drinking have a rare and memorable quality. Mr. Strong's style just lacks that suppleness of perpetual small surprise, is just a little consciously "conscientious." Delightful as the incidents are in themselves, and complete as their cumulative effect comes finally to be, one occasionally feels the lack of a bolder outline.

Miss Fannie Hurst is of an opposite temperament. She is in such a hurry—as though she has run a mile or two and is trying to blurt out her story in a single breath. She does, of course, hit the nail on the head, but with such feverish repetition. A few well-measured blows would be less of a strain on the reader.

The theme is the life of a woman, Ray Schmidt. Her family ran a drapery store in Cincinnati. Ray has style. She is gay—but innocent. She blows kisses to the car-men on winter nights because theirs is a cold and lonely job. She lets pimply youths kiss her, married commercial travellers pinch her leg. Some inner lassitude prevents her making a fuss. But when a man asks her to sleep with him she smacks his face. So far so good—or bad. What is the end of that kind of woman? Usually respectable married life. But the book is crawling with people no girl could marry, even if they asked her. Here we come up against Miss Hurst's incorrigible lack of economy. Must every man have pimples? Couldn't there have been a few less? Even Ray's sister has a couple. But the world is very evil in *Back Street*. You have to hunt as hard as in Sodom or Gomorrah for a just man. There is Kurt, a cycle repairer. He is like a dumb animal in his devotion; but unfortunately Ray does not love him. Then she meets Walter Saxel and falls in love. Walter is also attracted. But Walter is a Jew, and Jews, we are warned early in the acquaintance, take one kind of girl out for an evening's

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Playing the Game

AN interesting letter has come to the Brothers Goss from a reader of *The New Statesman*. Mr. X., as they will refer to their correspondent, first drew their blushes by considering that the Goss '*N. S.*' advertisements were "admirable of their kind and well-calculated to achieve their object," adding that they would have done so for him but for an important consideration.

Mr. X. felt that retail tailors generally were not playing the game by the public. They had not reduced their prices in accordance with the present costs of production.

This is an interesting question, but we will not attempt to defend *all* tailors. Gosses will just state the facts in their own case.

Mr. X. quotes the Wholesale Prices Index from *The Times* showing, as compared with the pre-war 100, a decline from 152.8 in December 1925, to 103.2 in December 1930. Thus it would appear that Wholesale Prices are to-day practically at pre-war level. Yet, Mr. X. remarks, "the price of clothes is still between 2 and 3 times pre-war!"

Similarly our correspondent shows how wool and cotton are now actually *below* the pre-war level, and the cost of living only 50 per cent. above.

Mr. X. concludes his most interesting letter by declaring his intention of resisting all attempts to persuade him to buy clothes so long as he can keep what he has "tolerably respectable," but graciously adds, "Still, I congratulate you on your advertisements."

Now let the Gosses give the facts from their end.

1. Higher grades of materials, such as those used by Goss, do not show anything like the drop of the lower grades.
2. Gosses pay just over *double* pre-war for their cloths.
3. Gosses pay *nearly treble* pre-war wages to their sewing tailors, and so scarce are real craftsmen to-day that they are open to engage a further coat maker so soon as they can find one good enough, and at even higher wages, if need be.
4. Gosses pay 2½ times pre-war rent for the same premises.
5. The rest of their overheads average double pre-war.

Sewing tailors were ill-paid before the war and bearing in mind the seasonal nature of the tailoring trade, the Goss brothers consider that even now a sewing tailor does not make a very good average wage.

The firm of T. Goss and Co. is run by two brothers, one with about thirty, the other with twenty years' experience in really first-class tailoring practice. They do all measuring, cutting and fitting themselves, and they use only first-grade materials throughout. Charges range from 7 to 10 guineas for a lounge suit or overcoat; 9 to 12 guineas for a dinner suit.

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entertainment, but marry quite another kind. Ray is of the first kind and she knows it. So she is hardly surprised to read of Walter's engagement to another. His fiancée all unawares buys her bridal veil in the Schmidt store; Ray serves her with it. Miss Hurst has a genius for such poignant propinquities. But Walter had reckoned without love. He cannot do without Ray. She is installed in a New York flat—his mistress. More than that, she is his adviser in all worldly matters, the moulder (a bit difficult to swallow, this), of his banking career. She is at the back of his life all through. Then he dies suddenly, before he can make provision for her. The rest of the tale concerns her growing old in solitude as a travelling saleswoman, and finally having to sell, one after another, Walter's gifts to her to keep herself alive. The last memento of him gone, she dies. The latter half of the book is quite terrible at moments—if one had time to reflect on it, if Miss Hurst did not hustle one on so. Her feverish monotone makes her difficult to read, but it is worth the effort, for *Back Street* is no trumped-up tragedy.

One closes *Saturday Night at the Greyhound* in a state of profound gloom. There is no gleam, not one anywhere. To start with, Ivy ought never to have married that golden-haired Freddy. The gold blinded her to the fact that he was just a petulant boy, despite manhood's years. Her brother Tom warned her. Then, with his predilection for drink it was double folly to take: (*a*) a public house, and (*b*) the Greyhound in the bleak, poverty-stricken Grovelace country. No, the outlook certainly was not bright that Saturday night. To make it worse Clara, the barmaid, was "in trouble" through Freddy.

The house opens; the leering and villainous populace lounges in bawling for beer, banging with their mugs on the counter for more beer. They lure Freddy to darts, the loser (Freddy) to pay one gallon of beer. Freddy gets drunk, Tom and Ivy work on, serving the drinks. A lady of quality, bored with London, enters and has a whim to spend the night there. She learns the history of the trio—has a vague notion of "doing something" for them; goes to bed and sleep.

Freddy is now playing cards. A trio of the villainous peasantry is cheating him of the whole night's takings, of his clothes, of the Greyhound's stock. The last bottle of brandy is staked. Enter the policeman. Curtain. . . . The reader has hoped for dramatic salvation from the lady of quality up to the last. In vain. Not a very agreeable evening's entertainment. "Truth" insists Mr. Hampson grimly. A word of advice, though. The milk of human kindness may be a soft drink, but unless he mixes a little of it with the raw spirits next time, the public may be tempted to try another pub.

In *The Sensitive One* it is not altogether obvious at first who that one is. The whole Moxhay family—so large that the book is prefaced by a genealogical note—is rendered sensitive, not to say overwrought, by the tyranny of old grandpapa Moxhay, stone deaf and waited on by two unmarried daughters. Every answer to his irate questionings has to be printed in capitals on a slate, which adds a peculiar bafflement to conversation, but gives a welcome touch of comedy to the tale, particularly at the end when a middle-aged son really lets himself go and denounces the old man, scribbling furiously on a writing block and thrusting the pages into his hands one after another as they are written. The family Christmas is grimly realistic. The personality of the old man broods like a thunder-cloud over the whole book—his death is a definite relief. The theme is not an original one: however, Mr. Kitchin does not force it, using it as a dry commentary on life. He has a shrewd, precise style, but a greater power, one feels, than he employs in this story.

The Royal Woman is a fantastic story. The scene is Germany in 1873, and the chief characters are Consul West, his flippant girl wife, two officers who are in love with her; and a slightly sinister financial speculator, Pidohn, of uncertain past, who also is attracted by her beauty. Croquet and philandering are the diversions of the Consul's garden, and all is light-hearted enough except for the beetle-like appearances of Pidohn in the sunshine and the disturbing undertones in his conversation. Then a poet, by a flash of insight, sees what is happening. Pidohn is tempting fortune by his speculations, the Consul is implicated, his wife is being overcome by a strange fascination for the man. The poet writes a play based on imaginary events after Sedan—Pidohn is Napoleon, the Consul's wife Eugénie—and gets them to dress up and act before an audience the secret reality of their lives. The idea is a clever one, the result exciting, and were the analogy a little more obvious, quite successful.

PROTEUS.

The Week-end Review

Since the "Week-end Review" was founded in the spring of 1930, it has quickly risen to a leading position among the Weeklies. In policy it is independent and outspoken; in range it covers most matters of interest to the intelligent reader, from home and foreign affairs, scientific discovery, books and the arts, to the lighter side of life and culture, always giving prominence to fresh currents of thought and endeavouring to present "both sides of the question."

SOME OF THE WRITERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO "THE WEEK-END REVIEW" DURING ITS FIRST YEAR

James Agate
Sir Maurice Amos
Prof. E. N. da C. Andrade
Maurice Baring
Vernon Bartlett
Sir Ernest Benn
Arnold Bennett
Robert Boothby
A. Fenner Brockway
Ivor Brown
John Buchan
G. K. Chesterton
A. Duff Cooper
Lord D'Abernon
Arnold Dolmetsch
Walter Elliot
Michael Farbman
John Galsworthy
J. B. S. Haldane
Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton
Prof. Lancelot Hogben
Dyneley Hussey
Aldous Huxley
F. Kingsley Griffith
T. Komisarjevsky
Harold J. Laski
D. B. Wyndham Lewis
Robert Lynd
Sylvia Lynd
Rose Macaulay
D. S. MacColl
Compton Mackenzie
Sir Oswald Mosley
James Maxton
A. A. Milne
Paul Nash
H. W. Nevinson
J. B. Priestley
Naomi Royde-Smith
G. Bernard Shaw
J. C. Squire
Wickham Steed
James Stephens
John Strachey
Hugh Walpole
Evelyn Waugh
Ernest Weekley
T. Earle Welby
H. G. Wells
V. Sackville-West
Humbert Wolfe

THIS WEEK (Out To-day—6d.):

THE COMING WAGE WAR
THIS MISERY OF GOLD—II. By G. D. H. Cole
AN ADULTS' CHARTER
EXTREMELY PETTY SESSIONS By A. P. Herbert
AFRICAN RELIGION: ITS SOCIAL IMPORTANCE. By J. H. Driberg.

Also Articles and Reviews by

Osbert Sitwell
Gerald Gould
Wickham Steed
St. John Ervine
T. Earle Welby
Martin Armstrong
Ivor Brown

THE NATIONAL PLAN: Further comments and criticism this week from: Ramsay Muir, G. D. H. Cole, C. E. M. Joad, Clough Williams-Ellis, and many others.

IT IS A MOST STIMULATING, ALIVE PAPER, AND I HAVE DECIDED TO TAKE IT REGULARLY—says a reader.

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DISCOVERY BY FLIGHT

Little America. By Rear-Admiral Byrd, U.S.N. Putnam. 21s.

Among the many remarkable photographs taken from the air with which Admiral Byrd has illustrated this story of his recent flight over the South Pole, there is one with a peculiarly direct and dramatic appeal which it requires no previous knowledge of Antarctic exploration to appreciate. It shows a wide stretch of sea and ice in the Bay of Whales. The Pole lies behind us. In the foreground we look down on the Great Ice Barrier with its glistening, precipitous sides, guarding the approaches; beyond are several miles of the dark, open water of the bay; and beyond that again the grey cohorts of the pack ice slowly closing in. The time, we perceive, is late summer: a few weeks more and the whole bay will be choked with ice.

It is a typical Antarctic scene. But closer inspection reveals a tiny, dark object adhering insignificantly to the Barrier at a point where the ice wall is low. It is Byrd's supply vessel, the *City of New York*, frantically discharging her cargo so that she may get clear away before the road is stopped. She appears a miniature ship—a child's toy gone astray. Around her stretches the great, white South, mile after mile of it, from the Indian Ocean to somewhere near Cape Horn; but that little dark speck represents the only human activity in the whole vast region, not a quarter of which has ever been seen by man's eye. To look at these things from the air is to realise with a sudden shock the puniness of our efforts—to understand why the seals would hardly trouble to look up as the aeroplanes buzzed overhead. The length of the coast-line of the South Polar Continent (*Terra Australis Incognita*, reduced in size but more than ever aloof) has been estimated at from twelve to fourteen thousand miles, and Admiral Byrd thinks that we may have discovered (not "explored") about half of that. Of the interior we know almost nothing.

Yet there must be a wonderful new sense of power in this discovery from the air. Geological parties and the like had to travel by sledge and on foot, of course; but for purposes of ordinary geographical observation Admiral Byrd with his three 'planes (or, rather, two, for one crashed early) was accomplishing more in a few hours than any of his famous predecessors had done in a week. It gave him an "odd sensation," he says, to rush through the air at the rate of two miles a minute towards some point which Englishmen and Norwegians, only two decades ago, had gone through weeks of suffering to gain. As he sped towards the Pole he often glanced downward at the long, grim trails followed by Amundsen and Scott, with hunger always stalking at their heels. He and his companions contented themselves with a few beef sandwiches! Yet they had thrown overboard two months' supply of emergency rations in order to help their aeroplane over the Queen Maud Mountains, and they must have prayed as fervently that their engine would hold out as any of their predecessors had prayed for the endurance of the human machine.

Of course they were naming new discoveries right and left, and taking possession of large tracts of land for the United States—quite rightly. But a pretty question arises here. Now that the aeroplane and airship have so vastly extended the explorer's range, would it not be advisable to supply him in advance with a suitable list of new place-names? It seems a pity to perform these irrevocable christenings almost on the spur of the moment. There can be no objection, of course, to "Lindbergh Inlet," nor to "Scott Land"—a generous thought; and there is no real reason why a mountain peak should not have been named after the ship's carpenter, and another after the cook. But one does feel that there ought to be a certain deliberation in these matters—something more than a mere kindly thought for one's backers and friends. As regards the former, their names have sometimes been identified with ways of life so widely remote from geographical exploration that to encounter them suddenly upon a headland or a glacier near the Pole inevitably produces a slightly bizarre effect. One of the most important mountain ranges in the Southern Continent will in future be known as Rockefeller Mountains. The generosity of Admiral Byrd's backers deserves recognition no doubt; but we have to remember that any wealthy person—a cinema "star," for instance—may decide to finance the next Polar expedition, and speckle the virgin map with names of his or her choosing. That is an uncomfortable reflection.

Admiral Byrd did not land at the Pole. As he says, there is really nothing to see; "one gets there"—that is all. But he flew over and round it, and dropped a flag, and then flew back again across the mountains and down to the Barrier ice where he had his base camp, "Little America." It was quite a big colony, for this was the most elaborate expedition that had ever gone to either Pole. There were dog-teams there, with their drivers, and scientists of many sorts, and two tall radio masts with a party of wireless operators, and men from "Paramount," and ordinary photographers, and newspaper reporters; and there was quite an extensive library in one of the huts. The free use of wireless greatly minimised the danger. Every expedition that left "Little America," either by sledge or aeroplane, kept in touch with the base and could ask for advice or help when required. The photographers were equally important and equally hard-worked. Admiral Byrd gives an amusing picture of two or three of them in the dark-room, working stripped to the waist beside a shoulder-high thermometer showing 70°, while their legs and feet were covered with thick fur and leather to protect them against the ice which covered the floor. A new map of the Antarctic is being compiled in America with the aid of their snap-shots. But it is already clear that much new land has been discovered and many valuable scientific observations recorded. It has also been established beyond doubt that "Carmen Land," which Amundsen thought he had found, existed only in that gallant explorer's imagination.

This is a memorable book. Clear and impressive in exposition, lively in narrative, cool and careful in statements of fact, it is never dull and yet never silly. It deserves the same success that attended the author's earlier work, *Skyward*, in which he described his flight over the other Pole.

TWO BOOKS ON TUDOR ENGLAND

Tudor Geography. By E. G. R. Taylor. Methuen. 15s.

A Woman of the Tudor Age. By Lady Cecilie Goff. Murray. 18s.

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hitherto made but little contribution to geographical knowledge. During the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, however, the travels of foreign discoverers, the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly of vital trade routes, the development of survey methods to meet military requirements, brought English people to think geographically as they had never done before. Cosmography "boomed" in sixteenth-century England as cosmogony is doing in the twentieth century, and the resultant jump in geographical knowledge opened out a new world to the Tudor mind, as the titles of geographical studies show: *The Pathway to Knowledge, Novus Orbis, the Whetstone of Witte*. Professor Taylor writes a trifle ponderously, and the general reader will find a good deal to skip, but the subject itself is enthralling and the book well illustrated with early maps and diagrams that reveal strange cosmographical points of view ("The wonder of Columbus's journey and later of Magellan's, to their contemporaries, was that each sailed *beneath* the globe"). A long chapter is devoted to John Dee, whom legend has turned into a magician: a strange person whose story proves how much modern science owes to the more serious astrologers. Dee's search for the Philosopher's Stone, involving an equally untiring search for the path to Cathay that the East might yield up its secrets, contributed as much as anything to the geographical expansion of the period.

The Tudor Woman is Katherine Willoughby, who at the age of fourteen became the wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Even as a child she was an important person at the court of Henry VIII., her husband's previous wife having been Mary Tudor, ex-Queen of France and sister of the King of England. Katherine's own mother had been intimate with Katherine of Aragon, to whom her daughter remained very sincerely attached; hence from her earliest years the Duchess of Suffolk was involved in court and political intrigues. After the death of her husband she became closely identified with the Protestant party, and during the Marian persecutions was forced to flee the country and to wander about Europe. An excellent subject, one would say, for a personal biography, but Lady Cecilie Goff's book is rather painfully impersonal. Katherine Willoughby is but a shadow seen through a mass of detail, which, though interesting in itself, has not been welded into any sort of whole. The author has gone about her research in a capable and even scholarly manner, but she has by no means drawn a clear picture of her heroine. In fact, it seems as if she had published the material instead of writing the book.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Fighting Kings of Wessex. By G. P. BAKER. Bell. 15s.

Mr. Baker has already given us several interesting historical studies, and his present review of early English history with its Continental implications makes very good reading, though his suggestion that the effective Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain after the legions had left was directly associated with the effective Frankish occupation of Gaul, that, in effect, Hengist was a protegé of the Merovingian Kings, deputed or encouraged to isolate Britain and to get it into the safe keeping of German tribes, is not lightly to be accepted. Such far-sighted diplomacy need not be surmised when the great migration of northern peoples will explain the simultaneity of the two occupations. It is better, however, to overestimate than to underestimate the statecraft of the Franks; and Mr. Baker has done well in forcing his readers to understand that the Early English Kings were in frequent touch with their Frankish kinsmen. Mr. Baker has a great story to tell and he tells it well; though the theory which it sets out to illustrate, "that the Kingship of England is not an organ of the State, created by a pre-existent body-politic to fulfil diverse functions of government, but is the original force which created the body-politic," begs a good many questions. Tribes which take to themselves Kings are already highly organised; not from a rabble could even the ablest leader build a nation.

A Journey in England. By FRANK BINDER. Scholartis Press. 7s. 6d.

This is the third of the "Benington Books," a series intended by the publisher to continue the tradition of English *belles-lettres*. The present volume is a collection of sedulously written pieces describing a tour of England. The author, an Englishman who has apparently lived most of his life in Germany, makes the obvious round of visits: Oxford, Chester, Lincoln, Kenilworth, Stratford-on-Avon, and Windsor. His "meditations" have a flavour of the eighteenth century, and their style is balanced and antithetical to a degree which makes them almost *pastiche*. The encounters in railway stations and country inns echo Sterne, even to a familiar dash or two; the continual references to a diary which is never produced, the pauses before a distant view, the ramblings in Cathedral closes are carefully dated. Mr. Binder in his own words has dwelt "overlong on elegancies of expression, on the lilts of language, and on the loveliness of alliteration" to write a book which is either easily read or in touch with its subjects. He has succeeded, however, by an obviously long and difficult process in assimilating his experiences, and his prose though overstudied is never a mere empty exercise. Few writers are as careful of their work as Mr. Binder is, and for that alone we should be grateful to him.

Bring 'Em Back Alive. By FRANK BUCK and EDWARD ANTHONY. Collancz. 16s.

The big game hunter is played out as a sensation. Next comes the man content to shoot his victim with a camera as it goes its way. But Mr. Frank Buck, who collects wild animals for delivery to zoos, circuses and dealers in America, has eclipsed them all. It is easy enough to admire beasts in captivity, without stopping to consider how they got there. But if every cage could bear the history of its inmate's capture and transportation we should gain greatly in our knowledge of the animal's character, both as species and as individual, and its collector's prowess. This is what Mr. Buck tells us, in as rich a setting of true adventure-story as anyone could wish for. To the layman this whole business of transporting animals may seem exciting; but Mr. Buck selects here only the most striking, farcical and dramatic incidents from his "routine" work. His idea of a dull task, for example, is to pick up crocodiles in the Indian jungle. But when you fall in with the giant amongst king cobras, who breaks through his cage and rears up to strike, the tale is worth the telling. Or there is the story of the two rare Indian rhinos from Nepal; of the man-eating tiger in Johore whose difficult capture won a bottle of champagne from the gay Rajah. And behind them is a picture of Frank Buck himself handling every species with a patience, sympathy and understanding equalled by personal bravery and resourcefulness in sudden crises.

Blood and Celluloid. By H. E. JACOB. Secker. 7s. 6d.

Here is a story of international ill-will. The crux of the matter is that a real live bandit is roaming Sardinia unmolested, not through the inability of the authorities to deal with him, but for the secret reason that he is the only attraction that district can offer to tourists. The idea is to take a film of the bandit's lair and his activities, show it to the world, and thus hold Italy up to ridicule. For the purposes of the story there are organisations in France ready to pay large sums to the enterprising individual who can do this. Provided one can accept the outlines of the plot, much entertainment may be extracted from this swiftly moving modern adventure story, with a ballast of philosophic comment on national moods.

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About Motoring

A HERETIC ON RUNNING COSTS

ONE of my motoring friends is a heretic on the subject of running costs. Orthodox opinion holds that a wise man will be economical in such matters. When he finds himself hesitating between a couple of cars, he is expected to prefer whichever car is cheap to run, unless he chances to be quite unpleasantly rich. The *petit bourgeois* is supposed to order a baby car instead of a 14-h.p. six-cylinder, because both will convey his family at very similar speeds, but the larger vehicle will cost about twice as much for fuel, tax, insurance, and the like. Similarly, a wealthier man is accused of ostentation if he plunges for a 25-h.p. or 30-h.p. car, when a 14-h.p. propels the same load equally fast. According to Brown, all such thinking is grossly illogical and foolish. He avers that it is a deplorable corollary of our buying cars when we cannot really afford to motor at all. Having committed a major extravagance by deciding to motor, we attempt to dope our consciences by petty and futile economies in our petrol bill. Thus we start our motoring career with a "running cost complex." We continue as we began. A few years later we calmly buy an ostentatious £800 car, which is from two to four times as expensive as our needs and position justify; and if some sour and impecunious relative accuses us of extravagance, we retort proudly that our £800 car runs 25 miles on a gallon of fuel, and is extraordinarily "cheap to run." If we happen to sell our £800 car at the end of the first season, we shall be lucky to secure more than £400 for it; and if Brown hears of the transaction he will wax very merry at our expense. He will not fail to point out that if we covered 10,000 miles on the car, it cost us about £30 for fuel, and nearly seventeen times as much for depreciation.

At this stage Brown's victims generally begin to grow a little peevish, and testily beg him to expound his own theories of motoring finance. Brown instantly accedes, adopting the Socratic method. He inquires why his victim has bought a sizeable Sunbeam instead of an Austin Seven. The victim is driven to admit, point by point, that he likes a roomy body, the road-holding qualities of a large car, and the special type of fifty miles an hour which occurs on half-throttle instead of on full-throttle. Brown then pounces. He extorts the confession that we don't mind paying for performance. He next cross-examines us whether we should not relish the inaudible silky speed of a Rolls, or the furious acceleration of certain supersports cars; and we admit that we should enjoy them both vastly. After these preliminaries Brown at last consents to soliloquise. He implores us all to banish genuine running costs from our minds. Airily and contemptuously he reviews the annual expenditure on fuel, oil and tyres. You may get your forty miles per gallon with a baby car; you will get your twenty miles per gallon with a really high-powered saloon, or your fifteen-to-twelve with a big Rolls or Bentley. The difference is perhaps £20 per annum on the two contrasted fuel bills; and £20 is a bagatelle to a man who is justified in motoring at all. Since we turned down the baby car because our souls yearned for a more refined performance, why didn't we turn down our 12-h.p. four-cyclinder or our 16-h.p. six-cylinder for the same reason, and purchase *a real motor-car* while we were about it? We innocently imagine it is our turn to pounce. So one of us hisses the phrase "capital outlay" with interrogative intonations. Another almost spits the words, "What about tax?" A third gasps something about insurance. A fourth presumes to clinch the argument by firing the heavy gun called depreciation. Brown remains wholly unmoved. He replies quite calmly that he is no richer than the rest of us, but that he would be ashamed if he wasn't considerably more logical. Our choice of a new car is always based on performance; and all our talk about maintenance costs is the purest camouflage. His choice of a car is similarly based on performance; he wants the very best car which comes within his means; and he is not going to be humbugged by niggling considerations of his fuel bill. So far as genuine running costs are concerned, there is precious little difference between the quarterly bills of a Rolls and a Morris-Cowley. The four points we have raised are far more important, he admits, than oil, petrol and tyres; and depreciation is easily the most formidable of our quartette. But all four can be sidestepped; and he knows how to sidestep them. He then tackles them *seriatim*. The capital outlay on a 20-h.p. may be £250 or £1,500, if you buy it new. Why buy it new? Is not a third season 20-h.p. listed at £1,500 better than a new 20-h.p. listed at £250? Will it not outwear three of the cheaper twenties? The tax on the two cars is identical, and anyhow it is only about £8 more than the tax on a Morris-Cowley, and what is £8 to a motorist? In every insurance premium there are two heavy items—the third party cover, which varies very little with price or power; and the replacement item, in the event of theft or fire, which is much the same for a new cheap car or a first-class car in its third year. Depreciation is the one serious deterrent to buying first-class cars. It will amount to between 30 and 50 per cent. in the first year, and the second year will add another 10–20 per cent. But this depreciation is a real asset to the canny buyer, since a well-maintained car of high grade is almost as good in its third year as when it was new; and one can therefore buy a two-year old car of high pedigree for much the same money as a brand new mongrel.

Thus Brown arrives at his real point, and Jones begins to turn thoughtful and blush a little. Jones has just persuaded his bank to honour his cheque for an imported 20-h.p. It is quite a tolerable car, but can hardly aspire to rank with the smaller Rolls. Brown, on the other hand, picketed a couple of large emporia during the late autumn, which is the season of Paradise for bargain hunters, especially during a trade slump. He has picked up a third year 20-h.p. Rolls for less money than Jones is paying for his imported 20-h.p. He tells us all about its late owner, who sold because of death duties, or too many railway shares, or some such tragedy. Brown goes on inexorably to prove that the Rolls will cost him perhaps a tenner more to run per annum than the somewhat decrepit four-cylinder which preceded it. That tenner will not break him. His tax will be £6 more. He will have to pay a little more for insurance. But when he has totted up all these extra maintenance disbursements they amount to a mere bagatelle compared with the depreciation which Jones must face next autumn. Jones, in fact, will probably buy another 20-h.p. each autumn for the next six years, and drop £150 on each of them—£900 in all. In the midst of this asinine extravagance he has the impudence to jeer at Brown for preferring a 20-h.p. six-cylinder to his economical old Cowley!

The ultimate conclusion seems to be that it is wise to buy the most expensive car which you can afford. There must be a catch in it somewhere; but none of us found it.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

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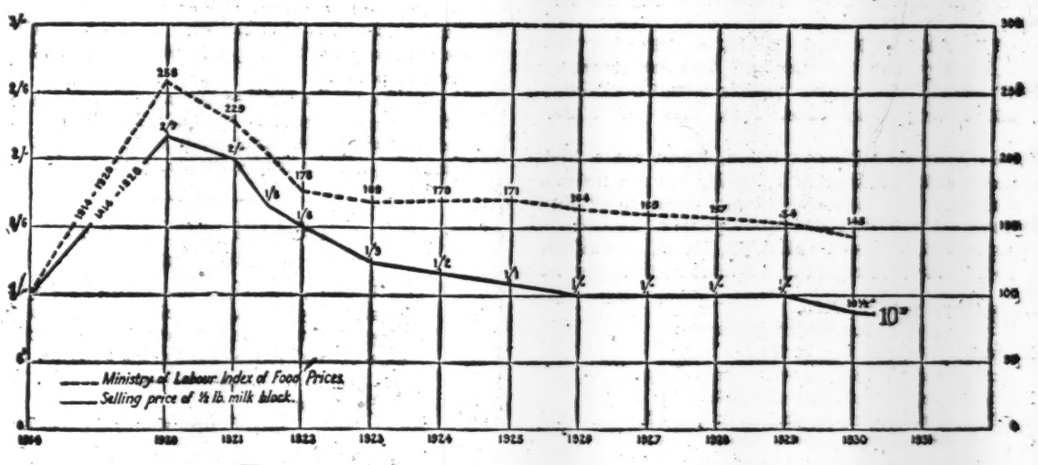

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PLAYTIME

INTRODUCTION BY CALIBAN

I WANT, first of all, to make known to you the Setebos Club. As everyone is aware, there are Highbrows and Lowbrows, and, somewhere in between the two, the Mezzobrows. But the classification can be carried a little farther. At the right end of the Mezzobrow scale are the Nozzobrows. They know a hawk from a handsaw, and some of them go to quite good concerts; but at Christmas, when Gonzalo's firm gives him a bonus, they are not above charades. Gonzalo and Miranda and the rest of us are Nozzobrows, and the Setebos Club is our spiritual home.

At first, of course, it was just an ordinary Bridge club—in the days when Bridge *was* Bridge, and not (as Alonso puts it) a cross between psycho-analysis and algebra. Then its character changed. The change began, I suppose, when Miranda first brought her tea-pot. As I once imitatively put it:

> Miranda, since her bids are Greek to me,
> Sometimes her contract makes, and sometimes tea;

and a member of the Setebos, asked if he plays the "two strong," is apt to murmur:

"No, weakish, thanks; and with a slice of lemon in it."

I walked into the Setebos Club yesterday, to find most of the old gang there. As usual, there was a lively discussion in progress. Miranda had bid a Small Slam in Clubs—a very good bid—but unfortunately had played the hand on the assumption that her bid was in No Trumps. The jubilant Stephano had promptly trumped her Ace of Spades, and the kibitzers were discussing, when I went in, whether any rule would allow her to go back to the beginning and start again. Stephano thought not. Ferdinand thought not. Mrs. Gonzalo was doubtful. I was at once appealed to.

"Never mind that, children," I answered. "Call the deal off, and put the cards away. I have something of moment to discuss."

"You don't mean you've heard —" began Miranda.

"— from the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION? Yes. I've had a letter from the Editor."

"And what does he say?"

"I've forgotten to bring it. But this is the gist of it. Bridge, he says, is all very well. The public—*my* public—calls for Bridge. Bridge, then, the public must have; the sanctity of Contract remains inviolate. But—and it's the *but* that matters—he expects from a club like the Setebos something more. How else, he asks, can you help to widen our horizons?"

"Whose horizons?" asked Stephano. "I'm getting mixed."

"The horizons of the British intelligentsia. How can we make Saturday—or whatever day it is that the thing comes out—the brightest day of the week? Fail me now, and our reputations are damned for ever!"

And I sank back dramatically into the easy chair, which Stephano had just vacated.

Trinculo sprang to his feet. "There's only one answer—*Crosswords*."

"Crosswords?" Alonso looked a little pained. "You can't give the intelligentsia Crosswords. You might as well offer Gonzalo ginger-ale. What you want is *Acrostics*. They're much more stimulating than Crosswords, and much more artistic."

"Alonso," said Trinculo with conviction, "you are a Mutt. I'm sorry to mention it, in front of Miranda, but it's no more than the bare truth. The Crossword, these days, is an intellectual instrument of the greatest subtlety and precision. I happen to be an expert on them. Miranda, my child, Caliban's problem is solved." And he began, as his wont is, to improvise:

> "Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
> With me you soon shall win renown;
> I'll put *across* each bright idea
> And you shall help me write them *down*.
> For in these days of duns and debts,
> When fame's a myth, and rank is mud,
> Cross Words are more than coronets,
> And simple clues than Norman blood."

"There's something in the idea," said Gonzalo thoughtfully.

"We'll put it to the vote," I suggested. "I, like Alonso, have a sneaking preference for Acrostics. But let's test the feeling of the meeting."

"Agreed," cried everyone.

Miranda distributed slips of paper. We wrote our names on them (we dislike anonymous voting); then filled them up and passed them along to Prospero.

Our Chairman adjusted his glasses. Then: "Very interesting," he announced; "the voting is as follows:

"For Crosswords: Mrs. Gonzalo, Gonzalo, Trinculo, Ferdinand and Stephano.

"For Acrostics: Alonso, Caliban and myself."

"And Miranda?" asked somebody.

"Miranda writes as follows: *Both too childish. We want something literary. Why don't you ask Ferdy to organise some competitions?*"

There was a pause, while we ruminated on this idea.

Finally Gonzalo said: "I wish, Miranda, that I was young enough to think *anything* childish. But there's something in it, all the same."

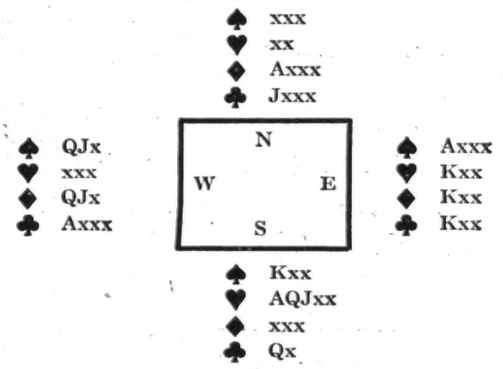
And there, for the moment, things rest. We've decided to put Trinculo in charge of the Crossword department, and to publish (more tentatively) Alonso's first shot at an Acrostic; but as to what will happen otherwise, well, the matter is still in Committee. I learn (unofficially) that Miranda is canvassing opinion in the best Nozzobrow suburbs.

BRIDGE

BY CALIBAN.

HOW TO BID AT CONTRACT: A SERIES OF ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS.

Hand I.: Opening Bid of One in a Suit.



The minimum requirements for an opening suit-bid of One are threefold.

(1) The hand must be worth 2½ Honour-tricks.

(2) It must be worth at least *four* probable tricks, if played with the suit named as trumps.

(3) The trump suit must consist *either* of at least four trumps, headed by AK, AJ10, KQ10 or better; *or* of at least five trumps, headed by QJ or better.

In the example given, the score is love-all, and South the dealer. South bids One Heart; his hand, it will be seen, conforms precisely to the requirements set out above. No other player has a bid.

In play, South makes five Heart tricks, the Ace of Diamonds, and the King of Spades. The accuracy of the bidding minima prescribed, where the other cards are so distributed that no one else can bid, is thus very well exemplified.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC

BY ALONSO.

> This is alive, and that, to-morrow's bringing;
> Then hurry, spring, in gold and green arrayed.
> Spring—to attention! Hark, in accents ringing,
> The Colonel moves his troops from off parade.

1. Of whom say I.
2. What's up, when rain is falling?
3. An Edison or Ford might fill the bill.
4. He's doglike, in the manner of his calling.
5. The flicks, by any name, will flicker still.

NOTE.—*No reward is offered for the solution of the above acrostic. Alonso, however, has a series in preparation in connection with which (he hopes) prizes will be forthcoming.*

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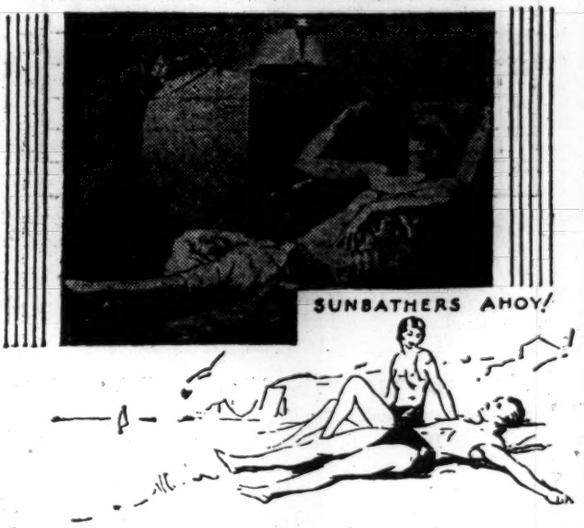

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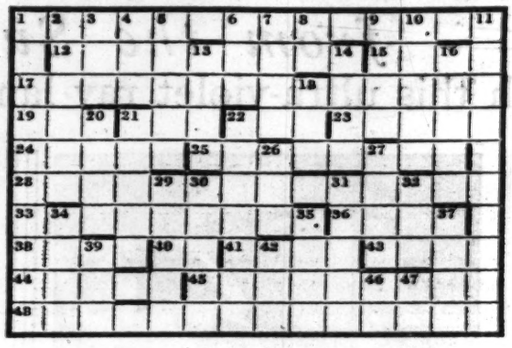
TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



WHEN WE WERE VERY JUNG

(*Clues are italicised.*)

ACROSS

1. *Our job, when we were very Jung,*
12. *Unwilling to let go,*
15. Has oft, perchance with *pain*, been sung—
17. As the *broad-minded* know.
19. The *same* day (21) *of a Roman god*
22. A *colour splashed* was claimed;
23. The *ages* through (24) *who digs* (how odd!)
25. Must *mend a lute that's maimed.*
28. While *one who is in spirits versed,*
33. With *samples* (36) of *a wine,*
38. (Since *rest* (40) a *number* still put first)
43. Off *well-hashed bird* may dine.
44. 41. Then do not *render fruitless* now
45. *What may in time return;*
48. *A science* there is, as all allow,
That teaches how things burn.

DOWN

[The clues *down* have been given in *positional* order (reading from left to right). Trinculo's colleagues have criticised this arrangement, and in future all his clues will be given in *numerical* order.]

1. My *manuscript* is *written o'er*—
2. The *Soviet chief* may prate:
34. His *way* (3) is *still* too apt to bore
20. The *joint* (39) *episcopate.*
4. *rev.* *Peruvian prince, and tail-less too,*
21. With *two* of clubs and all,
5. Comes, *heart and mind awry*, to view
29. To *measure* something *small.*
13. A *breastplate* that *no donkey* knows
30. *With us full fond* might be;
6. With *help* (22 *rev.*) *erased*, the prospect grows
7. *In France*, too *black* for me.
26. *Mon fils* (42) *a plant* (8) and *gold* (18) *all clear*
35. *rev.* My *promontory* grace:
14. Though Cæsar's *river* disappear,
31. *His works* are still in place.
9. Come, *dexterous* (27) *prince of ballet fame,*
46. Since *Uncle Sam's without,*
10. The *sprig* (32) *annoyance* brings, you claim,
47. But *I* am *twice* as stout.
16. Who *gibbets* then (37) his *fowl reversed*
(Any why should such be sung?)
11. Must spare our *feelings.* Safety first,
Since we are very Jung!

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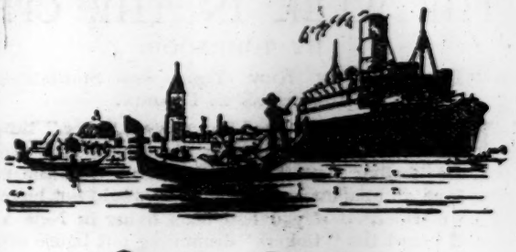

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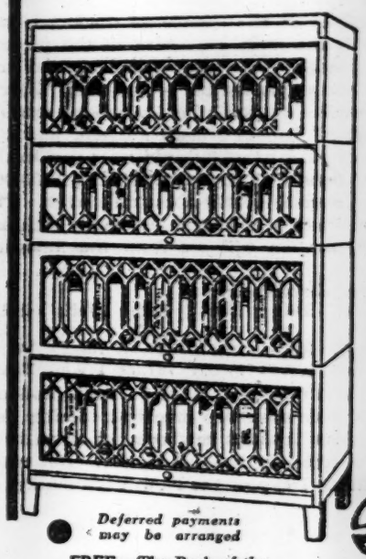

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BY TOREADOR.

THE "BOOMLET" IN NEW YORK—ITS SIGNIFICANCE—ITS REACTIONS IN LONDON.

HAVE you ever listened to a news "ticker" tapping out the day's events in deadly monotones and experienced the feeling that it was all unreal—that the news was coming from an imaginary world? You would not have escaped being so mesmerised if you had been living in New York this week and heard the "tickers" drumming out figure after figure to mark the rising tide of security prices. Another "boom" in Wall Street? Could this be real? Or have we been dreaming of the great slump of 1930? But natural phenomena have a natural explanation. The recovery in the New York stock markets in the midst of a world trade depression is a natural event that I have secretly been expecting for some months. It may not go far, if business in America does not live up to expectations, but it will happen again and again until at last it hits the genuine trade revival. The explanation is monetary. Security prices rise as a rule from six to nine months in advance of trade indices. Money has to be employed. When business men lack confidence, and the long-term capital market suffers from lack of issues, money flows into bonds on the Stock Exchange and into the short-term loan market. Bond prices rise and short-term interest rates fall. In New York the average interest yield on Liberty and Treasury Bonds is down to 3.3 per cent., and on U.S. Treasury notes to 1.48 per cent., while commercial paper (4-6 months) is selling on an average at 2.8 per cent. And still money piles up, because new capital issues for the long-term are below normal and are not absorbing current savings. Under these conditions surplus funds sooner or later find their way into common stocks, the "bears" rush to cover, and the fun begins.

* * *

The faster the fun, and the more furious, the sharper will be the subsequent reaction, and the more sorrowful the young "bulls" who bought on borrowed money. But this last display in New York is much more than the mere sport of "bear" squeezing as practised by the "professionals." I recall that last August the "professionals" in the City of London indulged in a little "bear" baiting. Prices on the London Stock Exchange rose for a fortnight and then collapsed. That was because there was no support from the public. But the stock markets in New York changed their trend last December. The American "bear" market ended on December 16th. Since that date American common stocks have moved up and down three times, but each successive reaction stopped short of the previous "low" point—unmistakable evidence of the change of market trend. This last swing upwards is the most important of the present movement. The "stockminded" American public have at last come back to the market and supported the professional "bear" baiters. Is that inconceivable to you who have been reading of the bread queues and Al Capone's soup kitchen, and the apple-sellers in the streets? For proof I would refer you to the number of shares changing hands, which increased from 1,700,000 a day on February 6th to over 5,000,000 a day this week. The rise in American common stock prices since December 17th has already been remarkable, as you will see from the following indices:—

Dow Jones Indices.

	Dec. 16.	Feb. 2.	Feb. 6.	Feb. 10.	Feb. 17.	Feb. 24.
20 Railroads	91.65	108.26	107.43	111.17	109.55	111.75
30 Industrials	157.51	164.48	170,01	181.09	179.86	193.90

Here is a rise of 22 per cent. in railroads and 23 per cent. in industrial common stocks in a little over two months! Seeing that the improvement in American business has been not much more than seasonal, the pace is certainly too hot to last. But when the correction has been made I expect the New York market to go ahead again.

* * *

The dangerous time for "bulls" may come next May. Last year the New York market, in discounting a spring-time recovery in trade, rose steadily from December to April. The slump came in the middle of April, when the public became disillusioned and utterly sick of President Hoover's promises. This year the stock market excursion train was slower in getting under way. The public has taken a longer time to get on board. But there is a greater supply of (money) fuel in the locomotive-tender, and the head of steam which has now been generated may carry the jolly excursionists a longer distance down the year. But that distant (trade) signal cannot be ignored. If it is not lowered in time there will be a fearful grinding of the engine brakes, and perhaps a serious accident. Meanwhile, to drop my metaphor, let us see which American common stocks have given a good account of themselves. Public utilities have been prominent and some of the old industrial leaders have returned to popularity. The following stocks appear to have powerful backing:—

	Highest 1930.	Lowest 1930 (December).	Present price.	Earnings 1929.	Est. Earnings 1930.	Div. rate.	Div. yield. %
American Telephone & Telegraph ($100)	274½	170⅜	200⅜	$12.67	$10.40	$9.00	4.5
Consolidated Gas of New York (n.p.v.)	136⅞	78½	99⅜	$4.75	$4.80	$4.00	4.0
Electric Bond & Share (n.p.v.)	112½	37⅛	61	$1.83	$2.40	6% stock	6%*
North American (n.p.v.)	123⅜	57¼	89	$4.26	$4.41	10% stock	10%*
Hershey Chocolate Corporation (n.p.v.)	109	70	95½	$7.65	$6.80	$5.00	5.23
Corn Products Refining ($25) ..	111⅜	65	86	$5.49	$4.90	$3.00	3.49
Liggett & Myers ($25)	114⅜	78½	91	$7.82	$8.00	$5.00	5.49
General Motors ($10)	54½	31½	44⅛	$5.49	$2.68	$3.00	6.80

* Assuming stock dividends are sold at price of original purchase.

For my part I would fight shy of the tobacco trade (Liggett and Myers) which is still suffering from a rate-cutting war, and confine my attention to the food trades and public utilities until the outlook is clearer.

* * *

It would be easy to exaggerate the importance of what I may call the "money" boom in the New York stock markets, but who knows that it may not serve to give just that final touch of confidence to the merchants or retailers who have been hesitating to replenish their stocks of goods? A rise in commodity prices, which have recently been hardening, may thus be brought about—assisted, here and there, by artificial or natural means of output restriction. Of course, the disparity between the prices of raw materials and the prices of manufactured goods is so wide that unless the latter come down halfway to meet the former, the return of the world to economic health will be a slow and painful process. Indeed, if commodity prices recovered only slightly from the present low levels the burden of fixed interest charges on the debtor countries may become unendurable, and refuge may be sought in the abandonment of the gold standard (where it remains), devaluation of currencies, compulsory reduction of interest, and default. The capitalist world is not going to climb out of its troubles on the back of New York stockbrokers, but on the whole a recovery in the American stock markets, for which there is ample credit available, is a good omen for world trade.

* * *

The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank of England, on the other hand, may not be at all pleased to see the New York Stock Exchange booming. If there is anything more certain than pessimism in the City to cause a flight from sterling, it is optimism in Wall Street. Unpleasant facts must be faced.

Mr. Snowden's statement regarding the conversations between French and British Treasury officials has fallen somewhat flat. It is, of course, something to have a "frank and cordial exchange of views" on monetary questions: it is something to know that contact has been established and will continue. In a better world contact would have been established long ago. But pious expressions of opinion to the effect that the French authorities "in no way welcome abnormal gold movements and have always been anxious, so far as it lies in their power, to avoid any measures tending to bring them about," do not solve the gold crisis. Everyone knows that if the maldistribution of gold is to be corrected, the hoarding countries must lend abroad; but when confidence in the debtor countries has been upset, how can foreign lending be resumed? A more hopeful feature is the decision of the League of Nations "to set on foot detailed discussions with a view to facilitating the placing of agricultural credits in Central and Eastern Europe." Meanwhile sterling has temporarily improved, and British Government funds on the Stock Exchange have recovered part of their losses. But it is an open secret in the City that the prime reason for this recovery was the anticipation among the wicked "money barons" of a split in the Labour Party.

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RUNNING at top speed, one could scarcely keep pace with political developments this week. People have often talked of a political kaleidoscope, but seldom with so much justification, for politicians of every camp are changing not only their position but, in some cases, their colour too. Sir Charles Trevelyan has resigned, so has Sir Oswald Mosley; the Tory confusion has reached a laughable point at St. George's, and Sir John Simon, whose future must now surely be in the Tory Party, has declared himself not only an "economy" merchant, but also some sort of Protectionist. The old type of Free Trade opinion, indeed, is losing ground so rapidly that the clear-cut division between Free Trader and Protectionist may soon cease to be a dividing line between parties, though the rival types of State interference in international trade will no doubt make an almost equally good battle-ground. Meanwhile the Government carries on, accepting spectacular reverses in domestic policy—the Trade Disputes Bill has gone the same way as the Education Bill—and making even more spectacular successes abroad. Few British Foreign Ministers have ever made so dramatic and, as appears from all we know at present, so admirable an intervention in European politics as Mr. Henderson's this week, while the truce in India, which creates an atmosphere in which a genuine settlement has a chance, has roused fury among the Die-hards and given new impetus to the Baldwin Must Go movement. Which means that the moral of the whole story is that it has become really important to keep the Government in power lest its work in India and in the sphere of disarmament should be undone.

* * *

It is long since we have had such good news from India as the report of the agreement between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi. At the time of writing the exact terms are not known, but there seems to be no doubt about the main heads. There have been, as there were bound to be, some concessions on either side. The right of salt making will be allowed to those who live on the sea coast. The boycott of foreign goods will—or may—continue, but it will not be used as a political weapon, and picketing will be peaceful. Some arrangements will be made about the restoration of confiscated property. The Mahatma has dropped his demand that the police should be put in the dock. So far as a general amnesty of prisoners is concerned, the Viceroy apparently insists—and rightly so—that this must be conditional on the calling off of the whole civil disobedience movement. The prospect of a settlement has spread a feeling of immense relief throughout India, and it is confidently assumed that the Congress leaders will now be ready to co-operate with the Round Table Conference. Of